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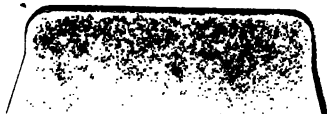
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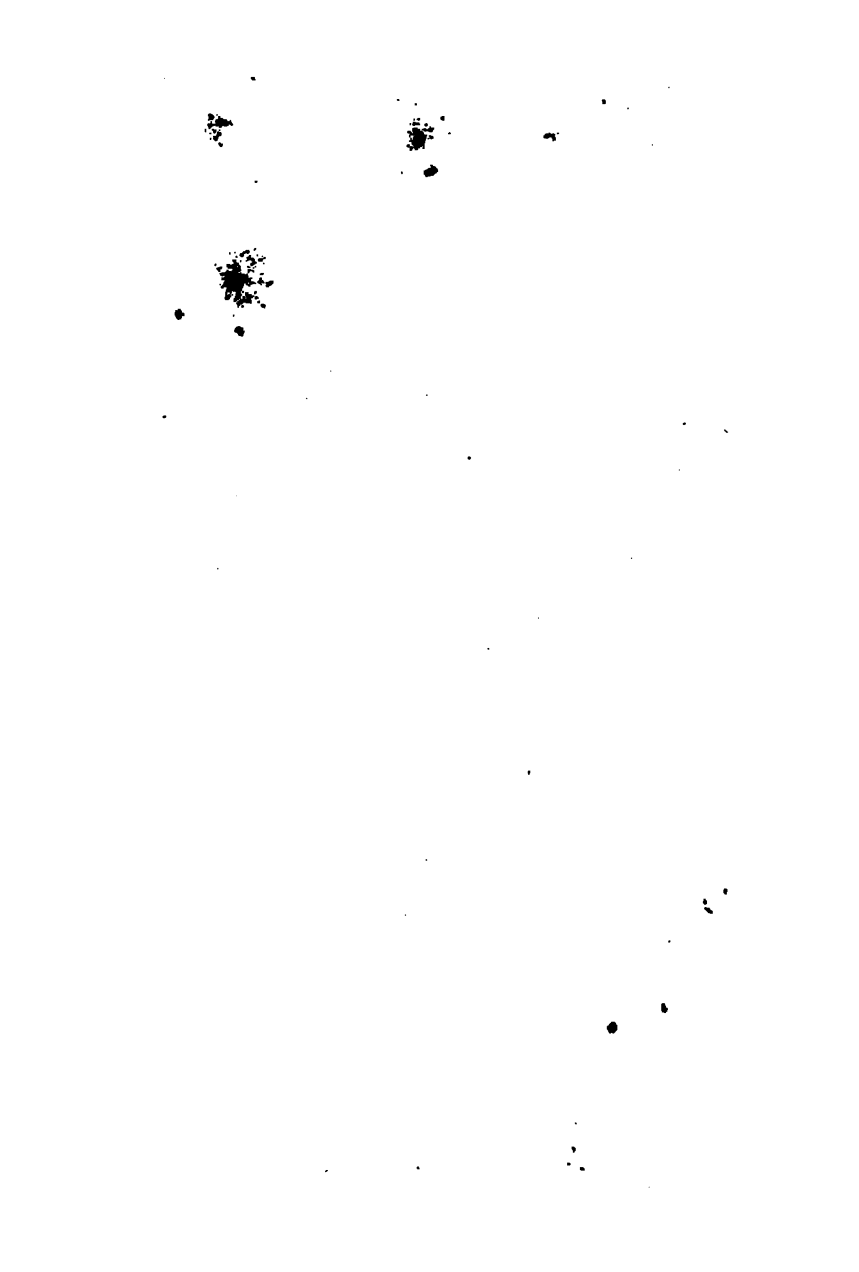
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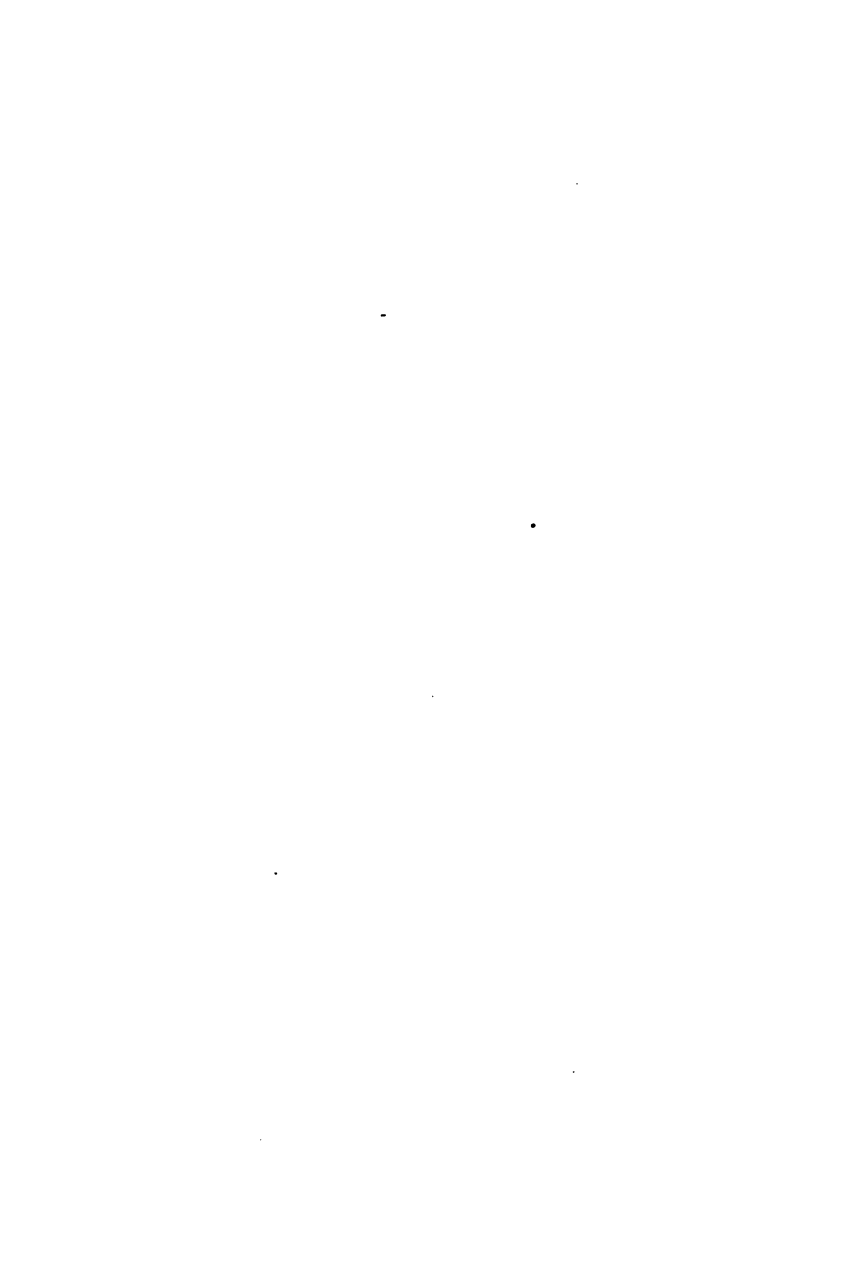




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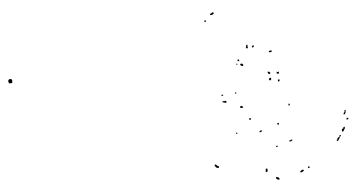






Abel Holt

AND OTHER POEMS.



ABEL HOLT

And other Poems.

BY

GEORGE AUSTER.



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To F. H. J. .



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ABEL HOLT.

LEFT in the city streets—outside the gates
Of that great nursery the State provides
For helpless babes, whom want or shame have thrust
Out of their mother's arms—laid at the gates,
A bundle, with a week-old life inside ;
And for all sign or trace of parentage,
A slip of paper, with a name written
Upon it, " Abel Holt ;" how should he know
Love? Rocked by a hireling, fed, nursed, tended
By strange hands, to whom no neighbourhood of kin
Had brought the quick warm touch that nourishes
The tender instincts of the new-born life ;
No fondling voice to soothe his infant wail,
No cheek to meet his cheek, when full of sleep
The little head sank down, and the poor babe

Shut his meek eyes upon the bitter years
That waited till he should have set his seal
Upon them; bred in a crowd of outcasts
Like himself; trained in a troop, when hardly
His tiny limbs, unaided, could answer
To their office; made oftentimes to feel
How void his claim upon the charity
That, like a step-mother, by duty moved,
Grim, loveless duty, offered to a child,
Supplied his needful wants, and in hard tones,
Enough to dry the sap out of the dole,
Bade to be thankful!—how should he know love?

A little silent child, pushed to the wall
By rough companions, all too early learned
In the world's art of shifting for themselves;
Praised only that he crept away and gave
Small trouble, and so crept away the more,
Wondering in himself at all he saw.
First at the rows of windows, so high up,
In at whose tops, upon a summer day,
The little woolly clouds would almost come,
But never quite; only the distant hum,
That like his own life, waiting for him, called

With dim appeal from the great world outside,
Where he would go, when he was big enough,
They said, to earn his bread. Then at the tall
Robed clergyman, aloft in vacant space,
Before the ranks of vexed and fractious spirits,
Who proved most irksome toil the weekly rest
Imposed. Somewhat he caught, in growing years,
Of "universal love," and "brotherhood,"
From Sunday sermon, but the words were lost,
From fault of faint reflection that their image,
Pressed on his heart, found in the life around.

Some things he liked—a woman's kindly smile,
Or cheery nod of well-fed guardian,
Rosy and sleek with after-dinner sleep;
Feeling a pleasant property withal
In the small waifs his golden hook had helped
To fish up, here and there, from the great sea
Where breeds prolific vice and misery.
But when the great gates shut him out one day,
And he must put his hands daily to serve
For bread and clothing one, who in his turn
Gave all his hours, from morning until night,
To serve *another*, but for little more—

The boy felt no regret, as one who leaves
His boyhood's home for ever, only felt
An emptiness where the regret should be.

What wonder, as the toilsome years went by,
And for all change brought growth and steadier skill,
To be apprenticed freshly to the same old task ;
Testing the inner core of poverty,
And reading riches by their blending light—
What wonder he should come to think that gain
Was highest good ? When the thought struck him
first

He watched, and saw how mighty was the thing
To bring a sunbeam in a shady place ;
Saw how an extra coin could fetch a smile
To women's cheeks, where smiling had died out
From lack of custom. Saw the father come
With wages won by painful over-work,
And make his dingy lodging glad with shouts
Of little children at the rare-got feast.
Peeped into closer homes where was enough,
By pleasant thrift, to keep a cheerful hearth,
And welcome for each little babe that came.
Abel would watch sometimes the rosy flocks

Of children, trooping back from school to homes
Like these ; see them burst thro' the wide-flung door,
And storm the mother, by the ruddy fire,
Tending her little infant on her knee,
With riotous kisses on the babe and her.
But when his steps led him to haunts where wealth,
Possessed in plenitude, seemed of life's pains
The healer, and the bringer of its joys—
Where beauty looked more beautiful bred up
In stately homes, and fenced by delicate
Observances, and every change, from youth
To ripest age, seemed but some newer form
Of pleasure or of ease—what wonder if
The source of so much good should seem to him
Fit end for worship, and the love of it
Grow in his lonely, untaught heart, in place
Of God?

Great longing breeds belief in things,
Where hope dare hardly come. So Abel set
His strength to work and win, to win and save,
And weekly rendered half the weekly wage,
Spared with delight from his few daily wants,
Into the master's hand; he one of those,

Who with close waiting on the claims of trade,
Gathered with one hand what the other strewed,
And made soft places where his leisure life
Might feed the other to its daily waste ;
Who bought a pleasant influence besides,
And popular notoriety, by means
Of clubs and gatherings of his working men ;
Encouraging with busy interest
The smallest savings from their moderate gains,
Which many yielded with a confidence
Unspotted by mistrust.

When Abel came
To be the owner of some golden drops
In the great unseen sea of wealth, his life,
That had before flowed like a sluggish brook,
Hid by the grass and reeds, seemed to leap up,
And course through all his veins with novel force.
Strong in the arm, and with a strength of will
Condensed and deepened by long self-control,
And solitary habit, he went forth
Upright to his day's work. He heeded not
The biting east wind blowing through the rents
Of a too scanty suit, nor all the gloom

November clouds could press upon his head,
Nursing his treasure, that so warmed his heart.
The gilded cross on the cathedral top,
Lit by the risen sun, could fill his day
With visions, rounded by a dream of gold
At night ; and if at times his spirit sank
By measurement of time against his chance,
So small and slow, the passion in the man
Rose above time and chance, and conquered both.

But when there came a day when Abel stood
With others outside the familiar gates
Of the great factory, grown dumb and still,
And heard the rumours from dejected groups,
Touching the sudden ruin that had come—
The news fell on him like a crushing weight
That takes away the power to think or feel.
Some heavy days he loitered near the place,
And then his fellows, half compassionate
For the shy lonely man, struck the truth in
him

With their well-meant but rugged sympathy.
When he knew all, he made no cry or moan,
But turned him round full of one simple thought,

To face the holder of his treasured hoard,
And bid him loose it from his cruel grasp.

There was a spacious house that Abel knew,
In a broad road, pleasant with fields and trees,
On summer Sunday mornings ; where the light
And warmth in winter lit the wide windows,
And begot a longing in poor passers-by.
Hither he came along the sunny road,
Mad with his loss, yet wrestling with the fear
That griped his heart so hard. Through the wide gates,
And by the gravelled walk to a side door,
And knocked there boldly, tho' his cheek was white.

Earnest the prayers, and strong the arguments
That rose up to his lips along the way,
But his heart failed him when he stood before
The great man in his shady library,
Serenely busy with his book and pen.
Then, for the first, he felt the difference,
The unbridged gulf between the rich and poor ;
And could do nought but stretch his hands towards
The calm, impassive gentleman, and speak
The choking words that broke upon his lips.

“ There was a man,” he said, “ the other day,
Who stole a shilling from a richer one
Than he, and him they took, and tried, and now,
He lies in prison ; and I—I have worked,
For days and months, for years, for years, years,
years,
And you have got it all, my little all,
And you are rich. In God’s name give it back;
Give me my money back ! ”

Then he, composed,
But with averted glance, and fingers meddling
With the leaves lying on his desk : “ My friend,
It were, I fear, but loss of time to both,
Should I endeavour to explain to you
How the two cases differ ; you, knowing
Not much, how should you, of our intricate
Tho’ admirable laws, might well suppose
Some likeness. I grieve that you should suffer
By mischance of mine, but I have suffered
Also, and you see that I submit. Now,
However gladly I might else return
The slender sum you trusted in my hands,
It were unjust to others, higher far

Than you (for in this case one law includes
Both high and low), and justice must be done ! ”
So sighed, and pressed a finger on his bell.
And Abel turned without a word to say,
And went ashamed—down the smooth walk again,
And thro’ the gate until he came to where
Some palings fenced a field beside the road ;
And those he clambered over, and sat down
In the long cool grass, and bowed his forehead
On his knees, and sobbed and wept, heart-broken ;
Like one who sees his first fresh idol melt
Into a sickening falsity that makes
The daylight hateful, and so presses in
The darkness on his eyes, and groans “ betrayed ! ”

But the strong soul has this advantage still
Over the weak, that his despair is but
Another form of strength ; and thus the blow
That dashed the slender shoots of Abel’s hope
Gave the root sturdier growth, and made his hands
Prompt to take up their daily tools again,
While yet his heart was bleeding for his loss.
Only another element, unknown
Before, mingled with his meditations,

And gave the spur to feverish desire—
Untempered hate and envy of the rich.
Now were they base oppressors of the poor,
Coining their very heart's blood into gold,
And making strong laws to protect the hoards
Snatched from the helpless by their ruthless hand.
Now were they very Cain, who slew for pelf
Their brother, and turned up their brazen front,
Disclaiming part or kinship in the charge
Laid on them by the God they feigned to serve.
But above all that moved his bitter hate
Were those who made great protest of their zeal
For the advancement of the working class ;
And ever had "the poor" upon their lips,
With loud appeals about their "urgent case,"
But never raised their finger's tip to lift
The burden that before their eyes so weighed
Them down. If Abel, in his far-off dreams,
Foresaw one crowning sweet, it was the power,
When wealth had brought him suitors, to deal out
His scorn on such as these.

All he could learn
By frugal opportunity he learned,

Or by self-teaching source and strength of thought.
Friends he had none, and small companionship ;
Silent in work hours, and in rest inclosed
Within a world where others entered not ;
A world rekindled by a secret hope.

Distrustful of advance by patient toil,
And hearing random talk of the far coast,
Where gold was dug by spade-fulls, and where
 grades
Were levelled by one greed, stronger than fear
Of death, Abel, with quick resolve, laid by
His earnings with remorseless thrift, until
They should amount to such a sum as would
Suffice to land him on that golden shore.
And till the wished-for day arrived he fed
His purpose, in spare moments, by the sight
Of rich possessions, close, but out of reach,
And oft would lurk, with watchful jealousy,
Near rich men's homes, but most of all near that
Whose lord, prosperous again, and sailing
On with fortune, had smitten Abel's life
In its one vital part, and left a deep,
Unseemly scar.

One morning when the dew
Lay thick on the young grass of early spring,
Abel pursued his frequent way, and not
The sweet fresh shoots, budding in tender green,
That pointed from the hedgerows as he passed,
Nor the glad birds, singing their morning hymn
Above his head, could turn the evil thought
That crept up to his heart as he approached
The well-known gate, flung wide, and the broad walks,
Scored with the marks of carriage-wheels, not long
Left on them, and looked up at the windows,
Curtained against the gentle light of day
On weary sleepers, weary with the toil
Of entertainment. With a silent curse
He wandered on some half mile, and then turned
Upon a rising ground, and leaned his arms
Across a fence that barred a broad meadow
From the road. How long he stood he knew not,
Watching one house-roof, gleaming thro' the trees
In the bright morning sun ; when suddenly
There rose in the clear air a waving smoke,
Sickly in the strong daylight, but thicker
As it grew, and blotting the shining roof
In part, with a foul veil before his eyes.

A moment Abel stood, transfixed with awe,
So like it seemed as if his evil thought
Had taken shape, and lighted on that house
Under his baleful gaze. Then, though his heart
Beat quickly, he strode back with rapid steps
Along the winding road, joined here and there
By other wayfarers, all hurrying
With terror in their looks to the same spot.

There, gathered on the lawn, they found a group
Of frightened servants, hastily aroused
From their late slumber ; and around, a heap
Of things incongruous, seized in the haste
Of sudden flight, and scattered heedlessly
Before the flaming horror that did lap
Its greedy tongues begrudgingly about
The unresisting structure.

All at once,

A cry that seemed to echo from the group,
Went upwards towards the flames: "My child, Edith.
The child!" She, of her parents the one hope,
A fragile blossom of eight innocent years,
Left in the wild alarm, by the scared nurse,

Who, seeming to have heard the father's voice
Where the child lay, escaped alone, while he,
Cheering his ailing, terror-stricken wife,
Bore her outside, deeming they were the last
To leave the burning roof. But when they saw
No Edith near, the mother sank as one
Stone dead, and he, the father, circling her
With his right arm, turned a white, helpless face
To the bland crowd, and shrieked again: "My child!
A thousand pounds to him will save my child!"

"A thousand pounds!" was it a dream, or he
A lying fiend who would betray again?
Abel leaped forward, and a moment read
His face, discerned the piteous truth in it,
And disappeared into the blinding smoke.

Few hours before high festival had been
Within those walls, filling them with light laughter
And gay songs; but, when the guests had parted,
And the tired servants hurried through the rooms,
Empty and still, quenching the glittering lamps,
One treacherous jet of light escaped their care,
Turned to *one side*; and by-and-by, when all

Were wrapt in sleep, a withered branch slid down,
Hanging one end over the watching flame,
And blazing up set fire to all the rest,
Till the walls shone and glowed with fiery wreaths,
As if some fairy wand had touched the leaves,
And changed each garland to a glittering snake.

All up the stairs and through the corridors
Were delicate statues, holding graceful lamps
Or vases, whence the shrivelled blossoms dropped
At Abel's feet, and blushing where they stood,
Fixed in the hot reflection of the flames.

The momentary scene struck vividly
On Abel's brain, remembered afterwards
Clearly, 'mid the vague horror of the hour.
The sense of helpless wealth, the luxury,
The waste, the coming ruin, all he saw
He noted, as he made his groping way,
Led by the shouts outside. He found the child,
Just waked from slumber and unhurt, snatched her
From her soft nest, and hurried back in fear,
Of but a breath's delay. The fire had caught
The lowest stair-rail ere he reached the floor

Below. It made him press the little face
Closer against the shelter of his breast ;
And as he met the childish eyes, turned up
In wonder, from amidst the loose tresses
Of bright hair, that hung in gold confusion
Over his rough and toil-stained sleeve, he felt
A glow about his heart that he had felt
Never before ; as if the distant hope
Of all his life, lying within his clasp,
Proved so much brighter than its promise was,
That he was startled with the novel joy :
As one who, with his eyes turned ever down,
Should dig and dig into the soily earth,
Grubbing for minerals, and find a star.

Safely he reached the portal, but before
He crossed the threshold, a glancing tile fell
And struck him, so that he staggered, giving
The child scathless into the father's arms,
And then dropped dizzily upon the turf.

Weeks after, when the half-burnt house had cast
Its ruin off, and stood erect again
In outward *seemliness*, Abel once more

Came to the rich man in his home ; sent for
This time ; for he, with conscience wide enough
To reap advantage of unrighteous law,
Yet shrank from violation of his pledge
Inwrought with the dear life so close to his.
The better joy in Abel's heart had died ;
But an instinct of manly pride and shame
Yet made him falter, with the due reward,
The longed-for treasure offered to his hand.

“ I give you these,” the father said, pointing
To the notes counted on his desk, “ because
You won them at some risk indeed, saving
My daughter's life ; and though the promise made
In the agitation of impending
Peril, doubtless was generous, honour
Impels me to fulfil the same. I wish
That I could add a hope the prize might prove
A boon to you, but I regret to see
The improvidence of the poor shows them
Unfit for wealth, which is a snare to them
Oftener than profit. Still, if I could
By guidance or advice of mine help you—”
But Abel broke in suddenly, reaching

The money with a frown, and said : “ Mark you,
Not as a gift, I take it as a loan ;
When I grow rich I’ll pay it back to you ! ”
And as the other smiled incredulous,
And waved him off, he turned round at the door
To say again : “ Not as a gift, I swear ;
I’ll pay it back with interest ! ” So went—
But in the hall the fairy child, the price
Of whose frail life was burning Abel’s hand,
Sprang on him from a door-way as he passed,
And took him by the lappet of his coat,
And held him, crying : “ Have you got your gold ? ”
And Abel, all abashed before the gaze
So earnest and so pure upraised to his,
Pointed down gaily to the child’s bright curls,
And, laughing, said : “ Why that’s the gold for me ! ”
Then, like a petted fawn, away she fled,
And back rebounding in a moment’s space,
With guilty scissors in one hand, held up
The other towards Abel, with the spoils
Of half one side of ringlets brimming through
Her alabaster fingers. Those she thrust
In Abel’s palm, crying : “ Quick, take it quick,
Before my nurse comes ! ” And was off again

With a bright friendly nod. And Abel wound
The golden tresses round the folded notes,
And hid them in his breast, and hurried out.

Out to another world than he had known;
A world so bright, it seemed as if the sun
Could never set; all things appeared anew,
In such a radiant light as comes in dreams.
And in a dream he lived, like one happy
By stealth, who fears to show his secret joy
To other eyes. He could have almost died
In peace with life; so near he felt the end
Of his desires, bearing the golden key
Upon his breast that should unlock the gates
Of fortune, looming clearly now, and sure
In the far West. Yet did not rest, but took
The wages of his last week's honest toil,
And then laid down his tools, and shook the dust
From off his eager feet, and sailed away
A summer evening from his native land;
Where was no home for which to think a prayer
No friend to bid "God speed him" on his way;
Not one warm hand to press his ere he went:
And coldly Abel gazed, without a tear,

On the receding shore, distinct, but dark
In the low setting sun; but when he turned,
The glowing light lit up his face with smiles,
Watching the gilded track the little ship
Followed along towards the golden sea.

Years passed; men came and went, and still Abel
Stayed adding to his heap. Some fell away
Glutted with gold, like heavy bees, drowsy
With sucking lavish sweetness; but the most,
Burrowing in the rich soil, like hasty thieves
Snatched a quick booty and fled back again
From a too lawless neighbourhood, where men,
Debased by ready gain, where gain was all
The goal, grew to despise the easy toil
Of getting, and took from one another.
Hither came the father, tearing himself
From wife and children, and picked up enough,
In few short months, to make his life and theirs
Smooth to the end; to sigh in after years,
With ill-concealed regret, that he had lived
To taste his wealth like ashes in the lips.
Here came the lover, mad with poverty,
That stood an icy barrier in his way,

Nipping the buds of hope with its chill breath—
Came in pursuit of a true life and sweet.
'That like a gentle dream went on in front;
'Took back a life where dreams would come no more
But scorn of dreams, the pride of sensual souls.
Here came the rising man of narrow means,
Impatient of his place, and took wherewith
'To feast his patrons, who came nothing loth,
Sat round his board and mocked him to his face,
Self-glorified to blindness in the sight
Of his own riches. And among them all
Mixed unrestrained bands from the brotherhood
Of vice and slothfulness, taking their share
In the free lottery; who, giving rein
To their foul passions, made a supreme court
Where Mammon reigned in person. There was he
The midnight cry that made the slumberer quake
On his green couch, beneath the watching moon;
'There was seen the murderous thrust in daylight—
The red life-stream poured out of him whose hand
Was left unguarded—for a lump of gold!
There men laboured in companies through fear,
Making a union of distrust and hate
To guard all from each other. When the day

Rose in a golden glory from the hills
The unblessed toil began, and when the stars
Shed their cool rays upon the quiet earth,
Men laid them down, not to refreshing sleep,
But with one cheek pillowed upon the bag
That held their harvest, and their fingers clasped
Tight round the poignard's hilt, to start upright
At the near rustling of a neighbouring branch,
Or night-bird's cry, shrill in the silent air,
And wake in horrid dread. And Abel lived
Among them all, gathering with the rest;
Shifting, when gold grew scarce, to those foul haunts
Where ruffians, with their fresh spoils in their hands,
Staked them and lost, and robbed to stake again;
And Abel, cool and wariest than the rest,
Staked too, and won, and ever changed his place,
And was a stranger wheresoe'er he went.
Ten years, and still his purpose was not chilled;
And still the struggles of his better life
Rankled within his breast. Often the scene
Would rise before his mind of that spring morn
When he stood, envious, near the rich man's home;
The English fields, the hedges, and the birds,
The sudden mist of smoke that rose and mixed

With the clear air; the father's piercing cry,
His own quick flight before the fiery breath
That close pursued him, and the golden head
That lay against his breast: and if, by chance,
Some gentler impulse in an hour of rest
Grew in him, from sweet peace of the still life
In some fair spot apart; if some bedimmed
And struggling fancy, an inheritance
Unclaimed, forgotten, from a purer world
He knew not of, rose in his loveless heart,
The thought came mingled with a childish face.

Ten years !—and then he took his place again
In a ship home-bound, taking back with him
More wealth than he had sighed for, and withal
A heart grown wise in wisdom that is sin.

Three days the ship sailed bravely in the breeze,
But on the fourth the sea and sky changed face ;
The ocean heaved and swelled, and the dense sky
Stooped down to meet it, and the little ship
Was tossed between them till it split in twain,
Scattering its helpless freight of human souls
Hither and thither on the foaming waves.

Not till no hope was left to save the ship
Could Abel think of danger; and, at last,
Girding his prize around him, he leaped out
Fiercely into the sea, and laid his hold
Upon a floating spar, and clung to it
As if defying Death itself to take
All chance away. He had no fear of God,—
But to sink, weighted with his gold; to sink
Within the sight of his life's goal and choke
In the black waves—that was a thought of anguish,
Of blind despair, akin to blasphemy.

A ship's boat had been lowered, and into it
Five men had got; Abel was drifting by,
And one held out an oar and dragged him in.
There at one end he crouched, and saw the wreck
Go floating past them of the sunken ship;
While here and there a drowning cry arose,
And men and women sinking near the boat
Held up imploring hands to them to save;
And Abel longed to save them but could not,
And hid his face until the cries had ceased.

It was the evening when the ship broke up,

And all that night those six men tossed alone
On the great waves, expecting death each time
The waters yawned before them like a grave.
But the next morning rose quite calm and fair,
And the sea rocked the frail boat pleasantly,
And sported with the wreck that lay around.
They had one oar, and with a canvas spread
They made a sail and left the wreck behind,
And wandered on, a blot of blank despair
Between the sunny sky and azure sea.
Few words they spake, but Abel sat apart
Resting his head between his hands, and gazed
Along the waves that rippled in his ears,
And leaped and fell into the distant calm.

They had no food nor drink, but still they strove,
For all their desperate case, to keep alive
The hope fast dying in their fainting souls.
On the third day they caught a flying fish,
And this they parted in six parts, and one
Carried his share to Abel, where he lay
With glazy eyes and passive famished face,
And broke a piece of fish, and put it in
Between his open teeth, and, with a smile,

Spake a brave word to him. Then Abel felt,
For the first time in all his hardened life,
A rush of tears that swam before his sight,
Making the broken sunbeams golden strings
Between the sea and sky. But presently
He grew delirious, and then he thought
The bright strings shone like threads of burnished
hair,

That grew into his heart, adown which came
Dim up on high, like white specks issuing
Out of the golden haze, fair angel forms,
With child-faces like Edith's, innocent
And clear ; and these held out their arms to him,
And beckoned him to rise, but he could not,
For the great weight he had girt round his waist ;
And he was lying underneath the sea :
Above his head the deep, transparent waves,
Went gliding swiftly, and he groaned, trying
To free himself, but could not move ; and then
He thought of One he heard of long ago,
Mighty to save, and merciful to all
Who cried to Him, and Abel tried to pray.
And by-and-by he heard a noise of shouts,
And many voices mingling with the rush

Of waters, while the light grew blinding bright ;
And then he felt a strong arm underneath,
And he was lifted up, so that the weight
Fell off ; and being lifted high he swooned.

When he awoke, he found himself laid down
Upon the deck of a wide ship ; the sails
Were flapping over-head, and the smooth floor
Heaved tranquilly on the slow ocean swell.
Many strange forms were passing up and down,
And some were stooping over tending him.
The ship was home-bound, and had neared the boat
When Abel lay in stupor ; and the cries
He heard were cries of rescue and of joy.
Few words told all their tale, and pitying eyes
Were wet, beholding their wan looks, that showed
How they had suffered, conquering despair.
And all vied with each other serving them,
Poor, stricken men, upon the voyage home.
Some gave them clothing, and some gladly gave
Their beds, and had none, for the ship was full.
The sailors showed them all rude courtesy,
With reverence for their peril and distress ;
For some had had close friends and relatives,

Who had sunk near them when the ship went down.
And men were friendly to their friendlessness,
And women tender to their pain and loss;
And little children, hearing their sad tale,
Would clip and climb about them as they sat,
And lay their soft, meek faces, on their knees :
But love was strange to Abel, and it filled
His heart so full, he often turned away
Trembling, from some mute sign of sympathy,
Unmanned, as he had never been before.
And all loved him the more because he seemed
So stricken ; and mothers, when their children
Wondered to see him stay apart and sad,
Taught them how they should love the lonely man
Whose friends were lying under the deep sea.

And when, the voyage done, the last kind grasp
Had slackened, the last friendly face gone by,
Abel lingered for days by the sea-side,
Taking a humble lodging, and would sit
Upon the shore-edge, like a waif, upcast
From some far wreck upon a foreign coast,
Unowned, unrecognized. His gold was safe;
And still he sat and gazed into the waves,

As if he sought for something he had lost :
His other self, his soul, he knew not what,
That the cold waves had drowned, and left behind
A lifeless weight. What was it that had saved
Him perishing in his despair ; his gold ?
No ! nor the lust of it, but human love,
Unbought, unpaid for, save by his sore need,
When he lay helpless in the drifting boat,
On the wide ocean, all too weak to lift
The burden of his treasure from his breast.

Then was his gold not greatest, after all,
But less than something that no gold could buy :
A golden girdle, round a weary heart
That beat against it ? Abel remembered
Sitting down on the green grass years ago,
And bitterly lamenting for his loss ;
But the first loss was nothing to the last,
Which was no loss at all. He remembered
How he had fed his proud heart on the thought—
Richer than rich —of seeking him who gave
The thousand pounds, and scorn along with it,
And throwing back the money at his feet.
And then he rose, a humble, broken man,

And took the money in his hand, and went
To seek the rich man out, and pay his debt.

Meantime, ten years had worked an adverse change
In the rich man's estate. Twice he had failed
Through speculation; and then, taking fright
At his decrease of fortune, madly staked
The little rest upon a foolish chance,
And so lost all. Yet could not stoop before
His poverty, but kept a shrunken state
Within the bubble that prosperity
Had blown around his name, until it burst,
And left him naked. Feeling with his wealth
His worth all gone, it was his feverish dream
To bring the fulness of the days gone by
Back to his nothingness. And so he strove,
Saying it was for Edith. She, poor child,
Left, by her mother's death, to little love,
Would fain have been his friend, and fostered him
In humble state; but he, who knew the world,
Showed his love for her in the world's own way,
And, turning from her in her lonely life,
Left her to droop, sad and ashamed for him,
In his weak battle, 'midst the thickening ranks

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Of wrestlers for the prize. And so sank down,
By steps, below success, until his strength
Failed him, full early, and his latter end
Came swift and pitiless, breaking him down
In mind and body.

On the day Abel
Knocked at his door, the sick man lay waiting
For death; friendless and shunned of all save one.
He who had sat so high he could not trace
The dregs of want and ruin that had sunk
Filtering from mischances vast as his,
As he lay dying, knew that there were those
Who waited in the house until his breath
Should pass, to seize his bed, his chair, his stool,
In miserable payment for mean debts,
The last few needs of nature; the last bit
He craved, the last draught he e'er would thirst for;
Even the shelter of the stranger's roof
He was so soon to leave. But when he heard
The message Abel sent, he bade him come
Before him, and held Death aside to hear
The tale he told. How, many years ago—
He rich, had given him a thousand pounds,

Which he had promised to pay back; and how,
By trading, speculating, in far lands,
No matter how, the thousand pounds had grown
And multiplied, and he, returned, had come
To render what he owed. And Abel stood,
Humble, in his great strength, at the bed's foot,
Holding the money. But the dying man
Roused to a flickering life by the dear sight,
Reviled him for his tardiness, grieving
To leave a chance behind him yet untried.

“And who could tell,” he moaned, “through all
those years,
How much he owed him? ah! what he had lost,
The money he had lost; and now to come,
When he lay there, without a friend to prove
His dying claim, and right his only child.”
And then he pointed to her, with her face
Hid on his pillow, that her sunny hair
Lit with a glory, and entreated him:
“Pledge me, a helpless dying wretch, your word,
You'll pay the debt to her!” But she looked up
With streaming eyes, and cried in bitterness
To take it back, she wanted none of it.

And then her father cursed her for a fool,
Saying she wished to shame him in his grave;
Till she fell sobbing by him on her knees.
Then Abel trembled with a wondrous ruth,
And stooping by her, laid one large, rough hand
Upon her head, and with the other spread
Upon the old man's breast, he said: "I swear
To give her all and more than all; I swear
To make her rich above all common want,
No God have mercy on me when I lie
As you are lying now!" The dying man
Smiled at the words content, and closed his eyes,
And Edith drew his head upon her breast
And those two lay together. Then Abel
Turned round and went his way, and as he went
The living glow he felt within his breast
The day he carried her, a helpless child,
Out of the burning house, rose there again,
And filled him with the same strong peace and joy.

As empty hearts who love for bitter need
Lose in a higher love their love, so he
Knowing not how or wherefore, missed his pride
In what had been the strength of half his life;

The passion to possess the envied wealth
Whose rich drops he had counted, one by one,
With costly payment of that hidden tide
That makes the quickened life-stream vermeil bright.
He who had saved and pinched from his own want,
And fed his thirst and hunger with the hope
Of gold grains, in the hollows of dry rocks,
Or by the sandy beds of vanished streams,
Was ready to give all to make the peace
Of one slight life, and call the smiling back
Into the sweet face that had filled again
The shadow of the one remembered good;
First gleam of love in all his barren life.

Long time lay Edith, sick and desolate,
When her lone watch was over, by the couch
Left empty; empty as her aching heart,
That knew not where to turn in a cold world
For comfort in her need and sore distress.
Wishing for death that came not, she arose
And sought the silent rooms where they had sat
Together; to her wonder found them gay
With fresh beauty and adornment, gorgeous
As her own outer life in days gone by.

And then they told her how the strange man, he
Who sought her father in his dying hour,
Had cast his gold abroad, and loosed the debts
That might have shamed her; and how he had
planned

To bring the brightness of her younger years
To do her comfort in her lonesome grief.
Filling her home with grace and elegance,
With such a lavish hand as love and wealth
Can bring together; coming every day
And asking, childlike, when she would be well;
But bidding them not tell her of the change
He had prepared to welcome her. But she
Found scanty welcome in the altered rooms,
And turned with loathing from their rich array.
And when he came again, she prayed with tears
He would not hold her thankless, but indeed
The show of riches made her sick and sad;
She had no love left for them, and would like
To win her bread, if might be, and to live
Quite poorly and unknown. She had no friends,
She said, who loved her for herself, and she,
Left as she was, would sooner shrink away
From all of gay and splendid in the world.

And she stood up before him, grave and sweet,
Fearing to wound him, and half questioning
If she were bound to put her wish aside,
Obedient to his bounty who had been
Her father's debtor.

But he was cast down
Utterly, to feel his gifts rejected:
To his hungry heart the taste of giving
Had been strangely sweet; and now his riches
Seemed to return to him again, until
He felt a savage fear before the thing,
As if, gathered with impure hands, high God
Had hung it, like a millstone, round his neck,
And bade him bear it, outcast to the end.

So with clasped hands, imploring, he stooped down
Before the orphan beggared girl and prayed:
"I am so rich; I longed so to be rich;
I crushed my soul out for the hard, hard gold,
It seemed so precious, and you hold it nought:
I thought it would buy rest, and love, and joy.
O God! I knew no better; I am lost:
A stained and guilty soul, and it can buy

No good thing for me ; but for you—for you—
So young and innocent, it may bring good.
It does bring good to some, but not to me ;
I know not why: it is all dark, all dark ;”
And then he dropped his forehead on his hands,
And ceased a moment, then looked up and said,
“ Take it, you are too weak for poverty ;
I will go back into the world and win
The daily wages of the years to come.
If all my wealth can bring you happiness,
And you are good, there may a blessing come
From it to me.”

But Edith wept, and said,
“ I am not good ; but I love every one.
But if you find your riches burdensome—
Oh, there are many wanting more than I ;
In this great city there are weary lives
Who strive and strive against their poverty
And have no hope—take you some hope to them,
Your gold will be no weary burden then.”
And then she told him how that wealth, itself
No blessing, could bring mighty joy and peace
In spending for Christ's love, though few there were

Who tasted to the full that deep content,
And said that if, indeed, he found no sweet
In what, to most, was the desire of life,
It was a sign his heart was better filled
With a more precious love. And hearing her,
Abel took comfort, and grew strong again
In the clear light that shone out of her eyes,
In the near neighbourhood of her true thought;
The very touch that fell about his feet
Of her slight maiden's dress seemed like the touch
Of healing purity that brings a hope
To darkened souls.

So like a little child

He learned of her, coming from day to day,
Till by degrees the scales fell from his eyes
And he saw light, the hidden light of life,
Which, shining back upon his own dark years,
Bowed him with fear and wonder.

By-and-by

Edith learned all his story, which at first
He feared to tell lest he should see her shrink
From what he had been; but she loved him more

For his hard friendless life, blinded with sin
And ignorance. And when he told her how
His first prize had been won, and with what gold
She payed him, Edith laughed through her bright
tears,

And shook her head at her old childish self,
Till Abel smiled and pointed at the curls,
Robbed for sweet payment as he had that day;
And then the smile went, and he begged again
That she would take his gold, and as he saved
Her innocent life, would save him from himself.
But she strove gently with him till the love
Of one grew to a higher love in him;
The love of all who suffer in the world,
And most of those who, with faint hearts and
sad,

Fight the hard battle of their hidden life
Behind the cloud of helpless poverty.
And that he scraped and gathered for himself
He spent on others, all too poor to pay
Him aught again; and many cheerless homes
Were brightened by his bounty, joyless eyes
Kindled at his approach, and pallid lips
Warmed with a blessing on his charity;

Young hearts grew hopeful, lightened by his hand
Of half the load of their short, weary life;
And to the old, impatient for their rest,
He brought a taste of peace, a sunset gleam,
Before the day was done.

Thus Abel grew

To covet grateful hearts in place of gold;
Grew avaricious of the rare-lit smiles
In joyless faces. But of all he won,
He said, the praise was Edith's; his the dross,
Hers the pure gold, and Edith was the source
And strength of his new joy; a joy herself,
His last found and best love. And Edith prized
His rough and simple homage more than that
Of the light hearts by fairer fortune brought,
And was sore troubled when the callous gaze
Of bold acquaintanceship, peering upon
The outside of their friendship, spake it ill;
But when she tried to loosen it, from shame,
Telling him she would owe him nothing more
But to remember her with kindness, that
Gave so great a pain to both, but most to him,
With fear of his old loneliness, he grew bold

To think of one so sweet and tender thrown
Upon a selfish world, and prayed her there
To stoop her gentle outcast truth unto
The shelter of a heart that she had stayed
From breaking. It was rough, he said, he knew,
For such a golden head to rest upon;
He was too bold, remembering his life,
To hope for such a friend. But she was glad,
And his large slack hand lying on his knee,
She put hers into it, and called him "Friend!"

And so he took her home, to his own home,
Simple and lowly; but Edith would not
'That he should add aught rich or costly there,
His loving faith was riches in her eyes;
And unto Abel's mind her sweetness made
His home entirely fair.

So years passed by
Bringing such peace to Abel that the pain
Of all the wrong of his past life died out;
Only the sense of his own wrong remaining
Made him humble-hearted. He was afraid,
At times, before his own unworthiness,

Half trusting the great love that gives the most
Where most is wanting ; knowing not how good
Is offered often to the hand that gropes
And does not ask.

But most of all a doubt,
A trouble of the time perplexed him, gay
Or sad. A time when high and low wrestled
For gain as for one goal ; when speculations
Of a day ran up, and overtopped themselves,
And fell, crashing with ruin, whose fragments
Scattered, and taking shallow root, laid each
A crumbling stone whereon to build again ;
When public credit was a thing of time,
And loss of it a moment's shame for friends
To palliate, for enemies to cull
Some venom out to sully character
Grown fair, rewhitened by forgetfulness.
A time when honest men joined hands with knaves
In the pursuit of profit ; nor thought shame
To build their fortunes side by side with those
They held at arm's length from their private
life ;
Who might have withered in their ignominy

If want of trust had had the power to blight;
A time when knowledge and enlightenment
Were held most wholesome, and whole tribes of men
Left year by year to rot in ignorance;
A time when softened customs held wide sway
Over the hearts and minds of men; when men
Grew up noble and generous, and women—
Loving, and true of heart, and pitiful—
Followed their gentle life content, and knew
That day by day amid the squalid ranks
Of penury some hungry wretch dropped down,
Wanting the mouthful that had kept his life
A living death in sight of their full store
Pressed down and running over. A time when those
Who, honest to look farther than the most,
Saw how the kingdom, prayed for clamorously,
Stood close outside and waited; and so fought
Against the blind and narrow bigotry
That held the gates against it—were contemned;
Denounced with slander by the public cry;
Assailed with sarcasm quick with selfish fear,
And oft-times stained in conflict with mean minds.

And this when Abel saw was as a cloud

Above his head ; but ever and again
The cloud broke, and the light of time to come,
When every man shall let his brother share
His last and best,—when none shall dare to lift
The idle hands in prayer that have not toiled
In the world's healing, while a spot remains
Where Christ's accusing finger might point down
“ Ye did it not to these ! ”—shone in on him
And lit his faith with glory, steadier
As age came on and took his strength away.

So was content, and cared not for the proud
And vain, nor hated them because he thought
From their high place they saw not all he saw,
So missed the highest good.

Some peaceful years,
And then his Edith died, being but frail ;
And for many days Abel found no cheer
In the bright sun, no pleasure in the fire-light
For an empty chair. Then he was alone
Again, and she but a fair memory ;
So took to pondering on his earlier life,
And soon grew tired, longing to join his friend.

He made a will betimes, leaving the rest
Of his great wealth to build an orphan home,
Out of the city, all among green fields,
Where stray babes, like himself, might learn God's
 love

By blue-bells in the hedge, and mother-birds
Hanging on quivering wing near the sweet nest;
By better knowledge, sown with gentler care
In their young souls, to fit them for a world
Where often good seems evil, evil good.

And this was his one thought, when being left,
He shut himself again within himself,
Living apart ; save for the few poor hearts
Too grateful for his benefits to spare
Abel their thanks. His one delight to sit
Before his door through the long summer days,
Feeble by nearness of his end, and look
Across the spreading meadows, blue and gold
With kingcups and fresh speedwell, and to think
Of little fingers plucking the green stalks,
And weaving crowns for baby-brows that shone
With the reflection of a pleasant home
That he had builded them.

So through the last
Summer, and when the autumn closed in gloom,
A cloud fell over Abel. As he lay
Sick unto death, and wandering in his mind,
The phantom of his youth came back to him.
Propped in his bed he thought he was far off
Gathering gold, but as he gathered, rich men
Plucked it from his grasp; and then he fled
Before them with his treasure to the beach.
Seeing a ship far out, he leaped into
The sea and swam; but the load weighed him
down,
And he was sinking, sinking, when the sun
Shone out, and showed the white sails of the ship
Quite close; and then the load fell off, and Abel
Stretched out his arms towards the golden sails,
Crying, "unloosed!" and so died, with a smile
Upon his face.

And many mourned for him,
With wonder at the end about his life.
And when they came to lay him to his rest,
They saw a seaman's belt clasped round his waist,
And from his neck a faded purse that hung

Above it by a thread. Opened and saw
A tangled tress of rippling hair that shone
Inside the purse-mouth like imprisoned gold.
Nor knew what either meant, but what they found
Left as what he had prized. And those two things
They laid with him together in his grave—
The empty belt and tress of golden hair.

SUN-SHADOWS.

HERE have I come this summer afternoon
To dream the hours away beneath the shade,
Upon the little meadow-island, made
By broad oak-branches spread between the sun.
Birds are calling, not high up in the air—
Out of the sweet green hedges all around,
And far off, where the white clouds touch the ground;
Of human life there is no sign nor sound,
Save for the narrow pathway, worn and bare,
That leads you to the road—and up and down
The ceaseless tramp of distant feet,
As now they pass and now they meet,
Going to and from the town.

It is the rarest solitude,
Just out of reach of other eyes and tongues,
Yet compassed by a tender consciousness
Of similar life ! For he were marvellous good

Who could shut out the world with all its wrongs,
Communing with his soul, and be at peace
For more than half a day! So will I sit;
And as the sunshine dips upon the grass,
And changes with the shadows at my feet,
Strange blending thoughts shall penetrate and pass
Through brain and heart, of God, and the fair earth,
And sleep in death; of life, and all the worth
That like a golden ray doth seem to fade,
Lost in the closing shade.

Slowly shaping on the ear
Come the sounds of the town;
Barter and bustle and strife—
Who would call that life;
Who could sit quietly here
On the green grass alone?
O army of toilers and fretters,
In many a ghastly row,
Heart-sore, bent-browed, soul-sweaters,
Do you gauge the work you do?
You are forging for your betters
Stronger chains than theirs for you.
A curse on the rotten wealth

That is got through the smoke and filth
Of a poisonous factory, where, I ween,
The "likeness of God" is the cheapest machine!
A curse on the baleful toil that parts
Men from themselves, and women's hearts,
Till every honest wholesome thrill
Grows stagnant and still,
And the life-current in their veins, at best,
Warms to the prick of lust or obscene jest.
O men with dull brains, and souls that are dumb,
And pale-faced women in rank and file,
I wish, with all my heart, you could come
And sit down here for a little while,
Where the sun doth shine,
Not on tears, but drops of dew;
And the grass is so green,
And the harebells are purple-blue.

Life is so sweet,—
'Twere enough to send
A last little sigh when it came to the end,
Into a tender-eyed green-leaved plant,
Dripping, clinging aslant,
To the side of a brooklet rippling along,

With its tiny, clear, everlasting song,
As it goes on its way to the river;
Just where two little eddies meet
Behind a moss-covered stone;
Catching the crystal drops as they run,
And sucking them into its juicy roots;
Helping the lordly trees and the fruits
To make the glad earth greener;
Spreading its tiny leaves in the sun,
Or dipping them into the stream;
And living on for ever and ever,
Living on in a kind of a dream
Of making the glad earth greener.

Life is so bitter,—
It were fitter
The loosed soul should sink
From eternity's brink,
Like a loosened stone
From a cliff, that drops down
To the sands of a deep grey sea.
It feels not the sea-weed that tangles it round,
Nor hears the sea-shells that lie strewn on the gro
And the undermost wave

That its brow doth lave
Is deep with a stillness that life cannot know.
It were well to lie so—
Still, and polished, and dead—
And let time go its way,
For work or for play,
Like the ocean, over one's head!

Life is so bitter-sweet,—
It were meet
At its close to lie on one's bed,
With a single friend at the head,
As one lies after many days
Of sickness, placid and calm;
And the dim, soft light is balm,
And the stillness prayer and praise.
And one watches the motes on the wall,
As they rise, and flicker, and fall;
And the afternoon wind
Creeps in between the bars of the blind,
And steals with a kiss to the cheek—
So placid and weak!
The eyelids fall too,
And it's over, the pain,

And one does not know
If one shall wake again!

If one should never wake!—
If this kaleidoscope we help to make,
All in our little hour,
Be but the changing spectacle for some high power,
Such as to us that lower life we look upon,
And patronize as if we made it!
We rule it, task it, and 'tis gone,
And we reck not to ask how we repaid it—
We reck not of their griefs and fears
Whose hungry hearts are full of wistful love
For us, incomprehensibly above,
Who, had we love enough, might weep the tears
They feel, but cannot shed;
And all their jealous hatreds we despise,
And all their pains are slight things in our eyes,
Thinking "They'll soon be dead!"
Suppose it should not matter much that we
Made such wild havoc of our one short day,
Since others will come when our day is done—
Others will come, and life will go on,
Although we shall soon be dead!

Were God blessed by mere change
Of life so rich and strange ?
Blessed by the beating of hearts a day old,
Blessed by the blessing of lips growing cold,
Blessed by the longings to rest unfulfilled,
The longings of souls that would soon be stilled ?
Then might one mourn for one's soul unblest,
As one thinks, in a musing fit,
One's soul might come for a moment, and sit
By the body laid out for its rest,
Saying: " Faithful, who since the hour of birth
That woke us by one mystic breath,
Hast borne me on the breast of the earth,
And borne me unto death ;
I dwelling in the great daylight,
Thou going to eternal night ;
I fain would give thee thanks, thou, lying here,
And knowing not, oh strange, I am so near ;
Untroubled brain, that, once so vexed and hot,
Devising nought, doth lie and wond'reth not ;
And thou, thou heart that oft hast swelled with
 pain,
And leaped for joy, and ached with tears again,
Perplexity, and toil, and woe

Have wrought their mortal work, and you
May rest for evermore.
Hands, ministers to every thrill,
Waked by an ever-tasking will;
And you, ye willing feet,
That patiently have trod
Along life's hard uncertain road,
To where the two paths meet,
Now lie you still, and other feet will come,
And other hands to carry you home
To a quiet nook by the churchyard wall,
Where the over-ripe acorns will fall
To the grass growing over the breast
That henceforth may rest
For ever and evermore!"

But if the soul should die—
Then might the soul take farewell of the soul
With a sad prospective sigh
As life went rounding towards its whole,
As the days went rolling by.
To die before the sun!—
Never to see the earth from far
When earthly life is done,

As one gazes here at some distant star,
Only knowing then what the endings are
Of the things that are but begun.
But to rest on one's bed at night,
Propped on an elbow half upright,
And gazing, gazing, with all one's might
At the moon sinking into a cloud;
At the moon sinking into its golden shroud,
And think of the coming day
That would set for us, till we could not pray
To the Father who called us to turn us away,
That were death made too plain!
Then were life but a shadow in truth,
And its substance pain.
What, shall the words of the dead, glowing words,
That sweep through the heart like awakening chords,
As one takes a volume down from the shelf,
And loses one's self in a higher self,
Shall their words be greater than they?
Shall those live in eternal youth,
And these sleep fast in their clay,
Blind in the light they have lit in their day?
And the smile that last year
Went out from a face that I held so dear,

In a far-off land, when I was not near—
Shall the smile that faded in trust
Of an endless love be broken in dust?
Or is it somewhere I cannot see,
Still smiling and waiting for me?
O God, if we did but know
That we must end where our bodies go,
In a darksome grave;
Why then, if we gave
The hopeless love and the fealty
Of our breaking hearts, O God, unto Thee :—
If we took the pricks and stings of our life
As soldiers, who spill their blood
In a foreign land, in a crownless strife,
And all for another's good ;—
Going forth to the field with a bitter smile,
For they know that death in a little while
Will stiffen the fingers longing to clasp,
In a passionate grasp,
The living ones left behind ;—
Could we stretch our mind
To some far-off time, when by higher and higher,
The struggles of human kind
Might land it whence it might aspire

To a life *we* shall never find;
So put we our hands to the plough,
Toiling to pain through the noon-day sun,
Asking no sweet fruit when the day was done,
But meekly laying the length
Of a worn-out strength
Where the worm doth bore, and the weasel run,—
O God, we were greater than Thou!
Still less would we hold the creed
That Thou, for our present need,
Shouldst have planted so deep
The thirst for a life on whose brink we faint,
As a father might paint
To his child some joy that would surely ensue
From a weary task that he willed him to do,
Knowing that ere the clock should tell
The hour of reward he had earned so well,
The child would have fallen asleep!
By the glorious sun that is sinking to rest
On its golden couch in the purple west,
By the sweet pale sky that is tender o'er head
With a light as of eyes that hope in their dead,
O God, the universal breath,
Thou art not a God of death.

Though the beetle swallow the ant,
And the swallow swoop for the dragon fly,
And the glorious hum of the insects' chant,
'Neath the vault of the summer sky,
Be full of a gaudy death that is set
To a pleasant melody—
What were death to a soul new-born,
To the rosy flush of a summer morn,
And ended at even song !
Our hearts are tender with sin,
And our lives are weighed with a debt,
And death seems to brand with wrong
The soul where life has been.
Low down to the things that crawl,
In whose going our sad eyes trace
The bitterer dregs of the ancient Fall,
The curse without the grace.
Till we climb to our pity's top,
And gaze past the point where faith's limits meet,
For an ever so distant hope,
For the life beneath our feet.

Life is so fearfully one !
We timidly feel along the chain

Where the electric thread doth run,
From end to end; but for us it is plain
Perfect break there is none.
And this little brown-furred worm that I touch
With tenderest finger-stroke,
As he rounds the slope of my knee,
Is a link in the chain, and as such
Has a right in the world since *his* morning broke,
And as great a right as I.
For I hold it a vanity,
That the myriad creatures that swarm,
Are but mirrors in which *we* may see
Our virtues and vices separately,
Each in a definite form.
Let us rob the bee by stealth,
Little miser gathering gold;
There are tracts, we are told,
Where the foot of man hath not been,
Where she safely stores up her wealth,
And feasts undisturbed and unseen.
There are isles in the Southern seas
Where no human tongue doth cry,
Where voices from many a living thing,
Glad voices, are raised on high;

From the chattering ape on his flowery swing
To the gauze-winged damsel-fly.
They all please God in their way,
How, we are not full wise to know ;
They please Him as far as they go,
But we more than they.
They ask not, or seem not to ask,
All careless of praise or of blame,
For aim or end in their task,
Where they go or whence they came.
But we—how we pant and strive!
How we cast up, and weigh, and compare,
Seeing two lives in the life we live,
Heav'n and earth, and wond'ring if this may give
A warrant to carry it there.

I marvel at the fear
Of those who though they love God well,
And feel His love, yet tremble to draw near
And tell Him aught they have to tell,
Unless their wants or woes be made to fit
Some casing to be found in Holy Writ,
Or they can put them in a sanctioned prayer
Of the Church Service, and repeat them there ;

Who think they ought
To quench each longing, wandering thought
The soul sends forth, in feeling after God ;
Who think the work and play,
The gain and loss of every day,
Too mean for Him to bless,
Unless they wrap them in a sort of Sunday dress,—
It is a far-off reverence, but odd.
For all that has been said or sung,
Methinks the world must yet be young,
When men are still like boys at school
Beneath the great Taskmaster's rule ;
They think to play behind His back, then look
With solemn mien upon their book
Of duty, when they hold Him near.
And when the time be come
When they shall offer Him the sum
Of their day's work, they put their trust
In that He may so in that hour be pressed,
Scanning the good and ill accounts laid bare
For His decree, that He will merely glance
At the result, all seeming fair by chance,
Not view the work complete,
Nor pierce beneath the lying and the cheat.

How grave they looked, last Sunday, in the church;
Each listening with down-bent head,
While the white-robed pastor read
From Samuel, the second book,
Of the old Philistian wars;
And told of him who had twelve fingers and twelve toes,
With the same warning look,
And more of admonition in his voice
Than when he offered them the gospel choice
Of darkness or of light.
Yea, told how light had visited the earth,
And men, unheedful of the second birth,
Loved darkness more than light.
There was a hoary man sitting within his pew,
Whose dealings with his kind are aught but pure and
true,
E'en in the sight of men; his thoughts seemed gone
astray
Towards the gets and gains of yesterday;
And yet he fixed a vacant, timid gaze
Upon the volume on the desk, as though
It were the rock upon the border of a land
That he was bound to keep in view;
The rock to grasp at with a drowning hand,

When the dark mists gathered before his eyes,
Ere the uncertain waves of life had hurled
Him, all unknown, on to an unknown land.
Such are the men who pass you scared and stern
If you but dare to look God in the face,
Though meekly as a child, who looks to learn
Plainer command in his appointed place.
Such do avoid you like a soul cut off,
Because you lack the surety of their faith
In saving grace, in moments stricken,
When the fumes of evil things do thicken,
And old beliefs loom pale along the path.
Theirs is the watch-word, and what worth
Pure life to lives which seem one long methodic scoff!
Oh ! Christ knew well, who callèd us His friends,
Not servants, how the heart doth long with love
At times, beyond all earthly love,
To be a little nearer,
And to see Him clearer
Who did us make ;
And the great God who sends
The impulse, sent it not that we should fear
To pierce the veil of sleep-life here,
But that we might awake.

Therefore my heart is calm in me,
Sitting under this spreading tree
And watching the sun go down ;
And I fear not to dream, and wonder, and hope,
Though I grieve at him vanishing over the slope,
And leaving me here alone.

Light, more light !
We owe not much to a day,
And we sleep through the darkness of night,
But to look on a day that is passing away
Out of our mortal sight,
Brings a weight to the heart and a fear,
And tears that stand in the eyes,
Though we think that for many a year
We shall see the sun arise.
Steady and clear and bright,
In the soul when the sun is gone,
Riseth an inner light
That shineth beyond the sun ;
And the light is often too great
For our lives that are trivial and small,
And the burden of a far-off fate
Seems to mock us all.

It driveth not, but doth call,
And the goal is distant to find,
And we are hindered by fears
Of what we have left behind,
And must feel for the way through our tears.

Slowly come the shadows creeping
From many a hiding place,
Softly come the shadows peeping,
Lest there be left a trace
Of lingering sunbeam, or a ray,
With strength to scatter them away.
But the day is gone, and they're coming
From as far as I can see,
And where the town was humming
They leave a canopy;
A still, low-hanging shape, or
Veil of hovering vapour,
To show where it may be:
And from the hedges thickly
They gather, and more quickly
In the branches over-head.
And the leaves move slightly,
As the shadows lay them lightly,

Each upon its tiny bed.

But they whisper, rustling in and out,

And I listen, and the shadows seem

To whisper, half in wonder, half in doubt,

“ What have we to do with him ? ”

Oh ! I know you have your secrets, shadows,

Which you brook not that a mortal hear,

Murmuring in the boughs, o'er moonlight meadows

When no human foot-fall passeth near.

And I grow to wish the time was now

When I the seen could be with the unseen,

Then I might be a shadow like to you,

And yet not less but more than I had been.

O shadows of the shadow-land, the bar

Doth seem so frail,

At times we scarce can tell

What keeps us back from being where you are !

But you wave your shadowy wings,

And I leave you with a half regret

For the shapes and touch of things

That in this mortal life do hold me yet ;

For the smile and household talk,

The warm life that seems to mock

The shadow-life outside.

Yet I linger and look back,
Half loth to leave the track
Across the meadow wide ;
Longing wistfully to know
Something more before I go
Of the spirit world, and you,
Shadows !

THE STRIKE.

Out again ! and a thousand "hands"
Of the toiling mass are at "play ;"
They have formed in resolute bands
For a notable holiday.

And great factories here and there
Stand out gloomy, and grim, and blind ;
There's death in the blank window's stare,
And the stillness of death behind.

Far over the country the pits
Yawn hideous desolation,
And the scene around ill befits
The heart of a prosperous nation.

The builder looks at his houses
Left unroofed, in their scaffold poles,
And counts his losses, and curses
His workmen, bodies and souls.

They have all turned out to the cry
Of the "rights of the working man ;"
Right to prove his equality—
That is, get more pay if he can.

The manufacturer, pondering late
His affairs when the others are gone,
Sits face to face with their critical state
Till he dare not sit longer alone.

He walks through the streets with a nervous look,
And with down-bending brow broods at home ;
While his lady-wife sits holding a book,
And the children are hushed from the room.

He has worked so close ! so early and late !
Till his temper's worn out and his health ;
For one holds such things at a lower rate
Than the raking together of wealth.

His aims were not high—a few years of life
To maintain his rank with the winners ;
To mix in circles polite with his wife,
And preside at grave public dinners.

But the men had turned out when moreover,
He was deeply in debt at the bank ;
What much matter to them if he throve or
Made one desperate struggle and sank.

He had never meddled with their concerns,
So they didn't take his much to heart ;
He held : when you've paid a man what he earns
You have honestly finished your part.

And they, simple in minds, didn't comprehend
That 'twas their inferior mission,
By working steadily on to the end
To raise " master's " " social position."

So he hates them, brooding over the fire,
With a more bitter hate than at first,
And would " starve them out " in his vengeful ire
If he could, without getting the worst.

Downcast and ashamed the labourer stands
With a group at the end of the street ;
Thrusts in his pockets his strong idle hands
And shuffles his frost benumbed feet.

He sees other workmen pass up and down,
With their loads, or their baskets of tools,
And can't quite make out, in a busy town,
The blest freedom of starving by rules.

It's true the delegate said over night,
Though for that he was paid to do it,
"If they swerved from the cause of truth and right,
E'en their children's children would rue it."

And he showed how the wealth of the nation
Now usurped by the masters, was theirs ;
That they'd all honest men's approbation
Prompt to aid with their pence and their prayers.

Said : 'twas a theory proved by all time
That the side of justice was strongest ;
And those who would win a triumph sublime
Must try who could "hold out the longest."

But the labourer finds, as the keen wind blows,
Cold and hunger a difficult case ;
And the thought of a sore pinched home he knows
Makes his hard fingers twitch and his face.

The mother hushes the babe on her knee
That has been in the world but a week,
And two more, at her feet, sit wearily
Waiting for father, and never speak.

They only look at their mother askance,
And then look at each other again,
And she turns her head not to meet their glance
For it strikes her with terrible pain.

Oh! little pale faces and wistful eyes,
In a struggle for silver and gold,
Such as you, the civilized sacrifice,
Must sit still, and be hungry and cold.

The dusk evening light peers into the room,
Out of sight in the narrow back street,
Bringing far-off sounds with its chilly gloom
Of quick life on its hurrying feet.

The woman hears, as one hears in a dream,
The distant turmoil of a city;
No murmur from that vast hurrying stream
Reaches down to her heart—more's the pity.

She remembers a night, some weeks ago,
A Sunday night in the falling year,
She went with a neighbour to see the show
In a church the fine folks go to, near.

She saw the ladies sweep down the long aisle,
In their silken trains, feathers, and laces,
And bend o'er their gilded prayer-books, the while
The lamps lit up their pretty, smooth faces.

The preacher said, "Man was cursed at the fall,"
But she thought the curse all on one side,
When so many poor had nothing at all,
And the rich had no blessing denied.

And to-night, as she hears the soft rolling
Of the carriages bearing their loads
Of lazy-limbed luxury, bowling
Out of town towards the country roads.

They seem farther off than they did before—
In the time ere the strike was begun,
The husbands brought home enough, if no more,
To buy food when the week's work was done.

But broken with want, the woman is fain
To pray God put an end to the strife ;
To lay hold on the fringes of wealth again
And so drudge out the rest of her life.

It is seven o'clock, the solemn hour
When their dinner is served to the great ;
That is *en famille*, if they've three or four
Friends 'tis *de rigueur* to dine at eight.

The ponderous magistrate sips his wine
As he sits at his glittering table,
With his wife in satin and jewels fine
And the vicar in clerical sable.

The footman has handed round the last course,
And has stolen away with soft tread
On the velvet carpet, during the pause
That should follow, when grace is said.

The magistrate, leaning back in his chair
And resuming the conversation,
Confronts his guest with a positive air
Saying : " Sir, 'tis this education.

“ In my early days there was not this fuss
Of bankruptcies, ruin, disasters ;
Things are come indeed to a pretty pass
Now that all the men would be masters !

“ How is it to end ? Is a greedy crew
To subvert the trade of a nation ?
It's hard to say how much mischief they'll do
If once risen above their station.

“ It's these philanthropists doing so much
To foster the mental improvement
Of the artisan, that has made him such
Fit tool for a dangerous movement.

“ He has learnt to think his own interest
Is of equal importance with ours ;
And always to fancy himself oppressed
By tyranny of the higher powers.

“ No wonder to hear the demagogues rant
About '*educating the masses* !'
One sees what *their* aim is beneath their cant,
To break down the distinction of classes.

“It’s preposterous !” The worthy magistrate
Almost chokes with his rage and his wine ;
And the lady, seeing her lord so irate,
Turns for help to the courteous divine.

She knows these sad people are hard to rule,
And to keep in their proper places ;
But *she* has her club and her little school,
And has met with *some* worthy cases.

And the vicar, a man of advanced ideas,
Grown bold in his Christian vocation,
Ventures to hint in the magistrate’s ears
“ May it not be the *half*-education ? ”

May it not ! Oh, fools, who shrink in affright
From the light of the life that is near ;
Trample it down, shut it out with your might,
You have peace and pleasantness here !

“ *God hath ordained rich and poor !* ” Fools and blind,
Who think to reverence His decree ;
Prop the tottering wall that halves mankind,
But never think it shall always be.

Never call your poor little system His,
And beneath its smooth surface, inch-deep,
A festering layer of poverty lies
But half-lulled in a poisonous sleep.

Build workhouses, almshouses, jails, nor doubt
You might offer a manfuller hand
To the blind weak grasp, everywhere held out
For some help in a great Christian land.

Oh you, who, for generations grown old
Undeiled by the vile things of earth,
Know want, as one knows a tale often told,
Safe enringed in your cordon of birth.

Or you who so late have climbed fortune's tree,
You stretch one hand for the golden fruit,
While the other thrusts down enviously
Your brother, laying hold of the root;

It shall rise, it shall follow you thither,
It shall flood to the very inside
Of your barriers, the great growing river,
With slow sweep of its levelling tide.

That under-current of life we despise,
For its surface shows of the folly
We know how to veil from sensitive eyes,
To tone down or to cover wholly.

Whose mimic precedence in low estate
We scorn ; whose piling of petty hoards
Through paltry dishonours we scorn and hate,
Models in small of our splendid frauds.

Who say, "The old system will last our day"—
Rather leap towards a ray of new light
With a longing kiss ere you pass away
Where no man works in the grave's still night.

Nor stretch the comforting doctrine of old,
"God brings good out of ill," as is meet;
In our holy joy for a Christ-bought world
Shall we kneel and kiss Judas's feet?

It shall come, though so far, at best
But the dawning hope of a few;
For the most, a sceptical jest
That the world should live to be true.

But so sure as the age of force
Has grown pale in an age of gold,
This Mammon-mad age in its course
Shall fail, and its days be all told.

And an age of character reign,
With knowledge for sceptre and crown,
When "position," and "rank," and "gain,"
Must shrink in the breath of renown.

It may be through the selfish throes
Of ignorance striving to foil
The thoughtless ambition of those
Who might thrive on its grudging toil.

It may be through the growing leaven
Of the clear-souled, far-seeing men,
Who have climbed so near unto Heaven
They know they must turn back again.

They must stoop from their moral height,
Must take part in a sordid scene,
To say, "Brothers, see by our light,
Come up with us where we have been."

But before the work shall be wrought,
Between the "upper" and "under,"
Will many a struggle be fought
Shall drive them further asunder.

Till avarice fall in the breach,
Till lucre be choked in the strife,
And the still small voice rise and teach
Humankind a diviner life.

THE SISTERS.

You call me gentle, Amy, you say I am patient and mild;

Will I tell you a tale do you say, of myself when I was a child?

Sit down beside me, Amy, and I'll tell you the tale of my youth,

As age has taught me to read it; it mostly tells us the truth.

We were but twelve and fifteen, my sister Alice and I,
When our mother, she never was strong, fell sick and knew she would die;

She took our hands in her thin white hands and clasped them together,

And said: "It is a world of trials and tears; children, love one another."

Our father had died before her, and brother or sister
we'd none;

So when she was laid in her grave we lived in the old
house alone.

Oh Amy! the dreary days of that first motherless
week;

I've wished them back before now, when I've thought
how we wept cheek to cheek.

We had just enough to live on; what a blessing, every
one said;

But I know that things had gone better if we'd had to
work for our bread.

I believe the soul may grow larger, although you
should work like a slave,

'Than if you've enough for your own needs and spend
upon them all you have.

We soon grew fretful and vexed with the trivial round
of our life,

And then followed evil tempers, and disagreements,
and strife:

Oh child, may you never know what it is to live day
by day,
And feel your heart from another drifting slowly, but
surely away.

She was fairer than I, was Alice, but her temper was
jealous and shy;
And she grew to be angry and hard, because she was
less loved than I;
If ever you long for a love, Amy, that is precious in
your sight,
However near it may be, never claim that love as a
right.

Love is not to be had for the asking, however the
heart may burn;
But Alice would have it payed down like a tax, not
given in free return.
She would ponder the words of a friend, or measure
the glance of an eye,
And if she thought she had not her full share, must
know the wherefore and why.

But I thought her narrow and mean, and was vexed
at her pitiful spite ;
And I spoke out with conscious self-pride : " Our
natures are different quite ;
Alice, you go your way and let me go mine ; a truce
to this childish strife :
I will suffer no more that your petty ways shall
hamper my larger life ! "

But the more I strove to be firm and unmoved, the
more she would harass and ' plain ;
Till again dispute followed dispute, like the dropping
of tedious rain.
Who was I, to be sought and appealed to always by
high and low ;
Had not the eldest the right to be first in all things,
she would like to know ?

Then would follow small oppositions, to prove her
right to rule ;
Such as shutting an open window or changing the
place of a stool ;

And if a few weeks' separation disjointed her subject
of wrath,
She would pick up the broken grievance at the very
word she left off.

I have lain and cried at night, Amy, when I was as
young as you,
To think of the wicked division growing betwixt us
two;
And now and then, when the mood was upon me,
sitting by her I've said:
"Alice, do let us try, for the sake of our mother who's
dead,

"Let us try and love one another!" but oftener she
would burst out,
With a helpless anger of tears: "You will set the
example, no doubt;
You're a fine one to preach!" then I, "If it must be
it must."
But I felt I was yielding weakly, though I knew that
she was unjust.

But at last I could bear it no longer, her jealousy
went to such length;
And I said: "I despise you, Alice, I despise you
with all my strength;
Take my pittance and welcome, take it and live
alone;
You'll think better of me, may be, you'll not hate me
when I am gone!"

And I packed my things, while my anger was hot, and
left her without a word.
She heard me go, with her back to the door, heard
me and never stirred.
But I thought with a bitter pang at my heart of the
words of our mother;
We two, left alone in the world, and couldn't "love
one another!"

It was then I began as a nurse, Amy, to tend the
sick and poor;
And I felt more peace in that holy work, than I ever
felt before;

The doctors often praised me, they said I'd a skilful
way;

And many a pale lip has blessed me, watching by
night or day.

But often in the silent night, sitting by some sick
bed,

That wretched quarrel with Alice would come into my
head.

I strove very hard to prove in my mind that the
fault was not mine, but hers ;

But the thought of her, lonely and loveless, came
between God and me in my prayers.

And trying to argue the point, I have thought of the
words of Cain :

" Am I my brother's keeper?" till thinking those
words grew plain.

He must answer to God for a soul, whom God has
made loving and strong,

If he fail in his self-satisfaction to help a weak brother
along.

Remember the talents, Amy, those who have most
must gain more ;

Must out of their flowing measure water the scanty
store.

If God has put love in our heart, 'tis that we should
cherish our brothers' ;

That when we give it Him back we may offer it
crowned with another's.

'Tis good to love the lovely, the fragrant bough bend-
ing sweet ;

'Tis better to search for the flower choked with
tangled grass at your feet.

Such gentle thoughts would come into my heart, and
I knew they were true ;

But it's easy to think, Amy, easy to think, but so hard
to do.

I wrote a letter to Alice, to ask if we couldn't be
friends,

But she sent me a mocking answer : "I could stoop
when it suited my ends ;

I was tired, sweet saint, she supposed, of my pious
task,
And was fain to come home; only waiting for her to
ask!"

Then my humour failed me again, and I said: 'If
she's still in this mood,
We are better apart than near, I can do her no
good."
So I stayed away, but from that time, as I was
told,
She shrunk ever more in herself and grew more bitter
and cold.

Three summers had passed since the summer I left
my home,
And I'd plenty of work to do, for the fever had
come;
Battling with death I'd forgotten Alice, safe out of
the reeking town;
But death has an eye on us all; he saw her and struck
her down.

Shut up in her fortress of self, disdainful life's duty—
God's laws,
She fell suddenly sick, as it seemed, from no earthly
cause;
I was worn with watching, and had lain down for a
moment's rest,
But when they told me 'twas Alice, I leaped up like
one possessed.

Down in a moment of time like a loosened garment
it fell,
All feeling of scorn or dislike, all thought of contempt
as well;
Like a vanished ghost in the sunlight, I looked for it
in its place,
And saw but its fading outline round Alice's dying
face.

She was weak and dizzy with fever, but she tried to
drive me away:
But I kissed her hot lips and cheeks, and begged her
to let me stay;

She laughed with a bitter laugh: "You can come to me
when I don't want you;
Do you come to me now I am dying for fear my spirit
should haunt you?"

"Don't vex me with kisses, I longed for them once long
ago,
I hungered for love with a passion, *your* love, though
you didn't know.
I was not going to tell you, not I, your contempt was
too plain,
Had your lofty heart stooped with your lips, your
words had not been vain."

But I stopped her with tears, crying, "Alice, I know
I was wrong;
My love was faulty and weak all the time that I thought
it so strong."
And I humbled myself before her, kneeling beside
her bed,
Till the hard look went from her eyes, and, "Nay, she
was wrong also," she said.

“She was jealous and fretful, but still I shouldn’t have
gone

And left her, those weary years to feed on her heart
alone.”

But those years seemed a dream to me as I sat by
her bed,

And moistened her burning lips and cooled her feverish
head.

I felt as if I had never known what love was
before,

I knew that if God spared her we should never be
parted more,

I watched by her till the darkness, I watched till dark
changed to light,

I felt so sure I could keep her, but she died in the
second night.

Do you know what despair is like, Amy? Oh no, you’re
too young, thank God.

Young or old, may you never learn to utter that dread-
ful word.

I sat by the dead love that might have been, might
have been, but could never be,
Till I seemed not to care for God, and He seemed
not to care for me.

But by-and-by, I heard His voice, speaking within my
soul;
“Take up the broken threads, thou may’st weave them
into a whole.
The seed of thy love is not dead, though withered by
selfish pride;
Set deep in thine heart, and watered with tears, it will
blossom again by her side.”

And though I am old, and many a love has warmed my
heart since then,
She said she forgave me, but Amy, I long to go and
ask her again.
I long to be by her side, and I know she is waiting
for me;
We have lived a long life apart, but where she is I
soon shall be.

I must go, little friend, but by-and-by you and the
rest will come ;

Though you have sisters and brothers on earth and a
happy home .

Keep a lowly heart, my Amy, and if it be pricked by
pride,

Think of the lonely old woman, and her sister Alice
who died.

ABOVE PAIN.

It has come ! with a blow on my heart that feels but
the fear

As yet, of the pain that is waiting and hovering
near.

And I wonder vacantly, holding it off, which was
worst,

The written word at the end, or thought of coldness
at first.

I can sit and search back through the pages, in care-
ful haste,

Lest some lingering breath of a passionate love die
in waste,

In a volume of life closed too soon; as we close a
book,

Upon sudden news of a loss, never daring to
look

On the page again till the blossom we left there be
dead!

The swift clouds of evening are gathering thick over
head,

And the mist from the garden beds creeps like a
ghostly veil

Wrapping the roses round, and making them scentless
and pale.

They will redden again in the sun, for he never lies;
But I, to hold my life by the light in a woman's eyes!
I, who could smile in proud sense of unloveliness
years ago,

And say to love :—"not here; there is that is higher
than thou!"

I who had stood aside and looked upon womanly
grace,

As one gazes, lingering long, on some sweet painted
face,

And asks no answering sign. Oh, why did she find
me out,

Long shut in my inner life, outside the fantastic rout,

Called the world? Why did she come to me like a
 ruffled dove,
 And make a nest for herself in my compassing
 love,
 From the fret of form and fashion, with its weary
 restraint,
 To leave me again with her loss, making my whole
 life faint.

'Twas I, 'twas I was the fool, to think that a thing so
 frail,
 Could live steeped to the lips in a dazzling lie and
 not fail!
 She shrank at the brink of "Vanity Fair" with its
 giddy whirl,
 But it clutched her, it sucked her in, my only love,
 my pearl!

Oh child! when you looked in my face with your deep
 earnest eyes,
 Saying: "Love, I love you best because you are good
 and wise"—

And I with my thirty years, I with my shy awkward
air,
Thought—her beauty has stooped to my soul and
read what is there.

Was there no truth in the rapture that made my heart
beat fast ?
Or was it a wretched illusion because it is past ?
It could not be truth, or I had not lived to see it die—
Have lived to see her cheek grow red in shame for
loving me,

When I have ventured too near, she gay and caressed
the while,
And I have stood lonely aloof, shut outside of a smile !
Oh, if she had soared above me, pure and saintly and
sweet,
My content had gilded the tracks of her vanishing feet.

But to see her hold on to the train of a senseless
drove,
Who would sell their shallow soul, at need, for a
tinted glove !

She whose cheek used to glow with a scorn of shame
to be told
Of one who would carry her heart in chains, if the
links were gold.

Hers may not be chained as yet, but that is all one
to me,
Since she's chosen the prudent course to "keep her
affections free!"
Free to the highest bidder! Oh woe to the subtle lust
Which can breed unfelt in the heart till it turn it to
dust.

My love was so pure and true, there was none so good
as she,
She came and sat by my side in her maiden modesty,
High as the stars above me, yet lowly as she was fair,
But my love is gone and I know not where, I know
not where.

Sharper than death to mourn for a thing that has
never been;
To wake from a sleep of years and find you have
worshipped a dream;

The chill of awakening life creeps through every vein,
As I sit, one human thing alone with my human pain!

Oh God! is it right that a foolish hand should hold
the power,
Of dealing death into life—though it last but an
hour?
That change in a feeble will, or chance of a roving
eye,
May brand a deeper soul than its own with a life-long
misery?

Or is this mortal pang of love, to us so hot and deep,
But a higher insect-pain, to be hushed with the rest
to sleep?
For plucking this flower from my heart I think has
loosed the grasp
Of some tendril of faith that twined them both in its
clasp.

I seem to feel the earth swing round in its atmospheric
shell;
Something falls behind, as it goes, with the sound of
a passing bell;

Father! too high—too high—that Thou shouldst
care to stoop and see
Our griefs!—and we, shut here, we cannot carry
them to Thee!

Have I slept? My cheek is cold from pressing the
window sill,
And the watchful presence of night in my room broods
calm and still;
Through the hoary vapour outside there pierces one
pale ray;
Not a star, but the first little streak of another
day.

I have slept a double sleep; the angel who loves us
best
Has laid his finger on brain and heart and touched
them to rest;
For my brain was weak and my heart sad, and I
thought my love was gone—
The love of my life, for evermore dead, in the love
of one!

No ! I will weep, I will weep, over a faded sweetness

I had thought to mould, by my side, into fair completeness ;

But 'twere not love, but the love of self, that could so enshrine

The limitless yearnings of love in one passionate
“ mine ! ”

Though our little cup can hold but one trembling drop—if clear,

One drop from God's ocean of love may mirror a sphere ;

And like the shade of a hanging leaf dulls the ripple below,

Is dimmed in its crystal depths man's love by a love-born woe.

I will weep, but I will not weep with unholy regret

That the germ of a love whose blossom is strewn holds me yet !

For the thought was untrue that I thought in my
bitter ruth,
That truth can be born of a thing that is less than
truth.

Perish pride ! I will stoop for my diamond that lies
on the floor ;
And will set it in the crown of my life's love for
evermore !
There will be jewels shining round, in other eyes
more fair,
But to me—through a mist of tears—it will seem the
brightest there.

And its little flame, burning clearer, purged from
earthly dross,
Shall light me through the coming years beyond the
sense of loss ;
My soul seems opening to a fuller worship than
before ;
The stroke was sharp, was sharp, but it has opened
wide the door.

And she, shall no light from an earlier truth strike
a ray

Through the phantasm mists that are gathering
round her way,

To point to a higher self, severed, shining above
her?

Must she ever stoop, my child? Ah, my child, now
I love her!

THE SEAMSTRESS.

WELL it does seem a waste that I should be sittin'
here,

With my hands before me like this, an' meat an' all
so dear!

A month ago I could see to place the seams an'
baste,

But now I can't tell up nor down—it does seem
a waste.

It looks more fair like when rich folks have got
a cross,

If they don't work when they can, if they can't
it's no loss.

Father used to think as things 'ud come right in
the end—

'Cause as he used to say, when they was worst they
must mend.

I thought they was worst when I'd got eyes to see
him die;
If I'd known that soon they'd be good for naught
but to cry,
I might ha' kept it till now; well, well, I know
it's wrong
To fly in God's face, but the days get so weary long.

I can see you bendin' down in the flame o' the fire,
And wavin' your arm; I'd catch hold if you'd come
a bit nigher:
You'd get on quicker—if it's a hem, two's better
than one,
And if it's as long as some you'll be glad when it's
done.

I never thought I'd be mad to think as I couldn't
sew,
But you see, as to things before us, we never
know.
Doctor says I might last a good bit, but if I tried
I know I could never get well, with this pain in
my side.

I'd as lief be gone as stop and be a burden on
you;
For you to have to slave for the pair of us that's
true.
But may be all 'ud like to go to Heaven, even the
rich,
Though they go dressed out all day, and never do
a stitch.

I was younger than you when I was put to the trade,
An' rare an' proud I was the first gown I ever
made;
But bless you they was plainer then than what they
are now,
Though I'm not old neither, it's not so many years
ago.

I think the dresses have more work in 'em every
year,
And ladies can't afford to pay for it all, that's clear.
They say at the shop they grumble dreadful at the
price,
But they grumble all the same if their things arn't
made nice !

I remember a skirt I made, all puffs and braid
between;

It was the prettiest dress finished as ever you seen;
But I went round that skirt till I thought I'd ha' lost
my wits;

And the first night it was wore, it was pulled all to
bits.

I worked for myself then, and 'twas months afore I
got paid;

But when there's lots o' trimmin' folks thinks it's
good for trade!

What with the gimp, and fringe, and lace, and ribbon
quillin',

All the profit goes in the time it takes for the frillin'!

Don't you think to save, my girl, by working day and
night,

All the good you'll get, like me, 'ill be losing your
sight.

I had my dreams, too, at your age, of what I should
do;

You've only got to look at me to see what they've
come to.

I thought if I could save enough to buy a machine,
I could go out and enjoy myself then like a queen;
And I wanted so to live in a house where the floor
Wasn't steps down from the street to go in at the door.

Always to see nothin' but feet a goin' up an' down
Whenever I raised my head in the midst o' the town,
I used to get mazy like times, and think I were dead
An' buried, an' the folks was trampin' over my head.

But you see for rooms 'bout here you've such a deal
to pay,
An' for father's trade an' mine we was forced to live
this way.
An' when I found I might pinch, an' work at over-
work
To the end o' my life an' save nought of any mark,

An' the house an' the sewing machine couldn't be had,
I took it so to heart it made me feel real bad.

"What was the good," I said, "of livin' a life like
ourn?"

"I'd most a mind to go and do that as shouldn't be
done!"

“Folks might talk, if they liked, o’ the world
 come; who’d listen,
When they saw ’em holdin’ on all their might
 this’n?
And specially when it was them as had ought
 know,
An’ set the example to us as was down below.”

But father, he said: “You’re a fool, my wen
 you’re a fool;
There’s One above all them, as ’as got the righ
 rule;
An’ you know it says, ‘Our years are but threes
 an’ ten;’
And it don’t need a deal o’ patience to wait till th

“There’s that in the world as oughtn’t to be, I d
 doubt,
But the why and wherefore it’s not for us to find o
We shall see it clear enough some day, you may
 pend,
Take my word, my wench, it’ll all come straight i’
 end.”

An' so I had my hopes in my time, an' now they're
dead,
An' you'll have your'n, and come to be glad to earn
your bread;
It's an awk'ard time in a girl's life, but it soon went
In mine, an' I quieted down, an' got to go on content.

I remember once that I went with a party though;
I'd dreamed on it for a month, I wanted so to go;
A gipsy party, in waggons, down along the lanes,
Till we come to some fields all green with the July
rains.

I never saw such a lot o' green; sprigged with daisy
dots,
It looked like a velvet gown, all 'broidered with white
spots;
My eyes ached then to look at it, an' my heart ached
too—
Them sights comin' of a sudden's 'most too much for
you.

I kept fancyin' in every shady corner of the field,
I saw my little close dark room, an' it made me wild

That the folks could laugh and dance there, eatin'
and drinkin',
As gay and as light as may be, and never thinkin'.

But there was somethin' else that day as weighed
upon me ;
Jem Morris hadn't thought then o' marryin' Jessie Lee ;
But she looked so trim an' fresh, an' her face like a rose,
I don't wonder he took second thoughts afore he chose.

I looked at myself in the glass, gettin' home that
night,
An' what with bein' tired, an' worried, I did look a
fright ;
I covered my head in my shawl, an' lay on my bed,
An' cried myself to sleep, a wishin' that I was dead.

They said I might ha' had him after, if I'd a mind,
If I'd taken notice on him, and spoken him kind ;
But father was aildin' then, and made only half
time,
An' I had to work double to keep myself an' him.

You may think as I hadn't much time to go after Jem;
Tho' men fancy you've nothin' to do but to 'tend to
them.

It didn't make things lighter to know as he was with
her,

But you gets over most things in time if you don't
make a stir.

They was a good bit courtin', an' when they married,
I seemed

To care for him like you care, awake, for a dream
you've dreamed;

An' I gave her a bit o' silk to make her a bonnet,
Because it felt Christian-like—white, with a sprig
upon it.

It wasn't long after as father was took for death;
You'd come to us then, and he said with his latest
breath:—

"Take care of poor Lizzie's girl, an' work and wait
till the end."

You was his sister's child, an', save us, you hadn't a
friend.

An' when I'd worked through watchin,' thro' hope an'
fear, what's worse,
I had to work through the first bitter hours of my
loss;
I'd a power of orders about, and then, you see,
There was the black that had to be made for you an'
me.

I mind one night, I was sewin' away in the
gloom,
Half ready to drop with sleep, all alone in my
room,
And mitherin' like, I'd gone and stitched a beadin'
o' crape
Round the top of a blue silk sleeve in the form of a
cape,

And the door opened an' I said: "Oh father look
here!"

An he were lying dead!—it cost me many a tear.
But after, I'd you to provide for when he was
gone,
An' doin' for somebody else it carries you on.

"Wait to the end," he said; I think it's very near
come;
I feel as if I'd had my day out and was goin' home.
An' oh! what a handful of work one seems to ha'
done,
When one sees it finished—life spent and so little
won!

I never wanted for spirit, an' I often thought,
Work might even be sweet, if things was set as they
ought;
But to sit and stitch one's days through with needle
and thread,
To wear body an' soul, an' all for one's daily bread;

I couldn't believe it was right, it may be, God
knows;
Leastways I suppose He could alter it if He
chose;
An' them thoughts only makes you bitter, just or
unjust;
You can't make it out wi' thinkin', it's better to
trust.

It's hard to stand aside an' watch all that's pleasant
go by,
It's hard to think as you can't win rest by honest work
if you try,
The bright things and bright places in this world we
never see,
But there's as bright i' the next, I doubt, as God'll
keep for we.

* * * * *

Why, what's the time? I believe I talked myself to
sleep,
The light's gone so dim, and the chilly air seems to
creep
In the house like evenin'; I fancy I dozed away,
For a minute ago the room was as light as day.

An' I thought I saw some figures with branches in
their hands,
All dressed in long white dresses an' shinin' golden
bands.
They seemed to be a waitin' an' beckonin' for me,
An' they stood inside the room as plain as plain
could be.

erhaps it was a signal I'm a goin' before long,
hey looked so peaceful, I wish it may, if it isn't
wrong—
ong plain white gowns they had;—I must ha' been
dreamin',
raight from the throat to the feet, there wasn't no
trimmin'!

“THE DAYS THAT ARE NO MORE.”

THERE'S a certain flower that I know
That blossoms late in the spring,
And many and many a year ago
When I was a bright young thing,
No matter how, and no matter why,
This flower with its subtle scent,
Crept into my heart in a time when I
Was filled with a great content.

The grace of that day is long gone,
The hopes that lived for an hour,
Have faded and vanished, by one and one,
But when the scent of that flower
Is borne in on the summer wind,
I listen and turn my head,
While my heart stands still, for a look behind
On the old life that is dead !

THE "EVENING STAR."

In late autumn evenings, when the wind without
Makes the panes creak, blowing gustily,
Closed within the red hearth-light, we read about
The sudden disasters at sea.

Till the page falls and we gaze into the fire,
And perchance blind pity that doth wring
Our hearts, grows to a knowledge that doth point us
higher,
And death seems but a little thing.

Out of New York harbour, an October day,
Sailed a goodly ship, the "Evening Star;"
Fair it was, and breezy, and she sailed away,
Riding lightly over the bar.

Light the ship was, and light-hearted as the breeze
Thronged the deck a merry company,
And they danced as who might dance beneath green
trees,
And sang to the rippling of the sea.

A few fair days, and then the wind rose crying,
And a ring of clouds closed round the ship,
And then came questionings and fearful eyeing
Of the ocean, grown so black and deep.

But the blackness grew, until the vessel seemed
To heave and reel beneath an iron lid,
On a sea ink-black, save for the foam, which creamed
Above the deck, and fell, and slid.

Three days and nights the storm lived, and then
fearless,
In death's face the captain came below ;
Looked with brave eyes on eyes bewildered, tearless,
Said: "I have done what man can do."

And as a knell that tells all chance has perished,
Fell the words on each despairing heart,
And those that while all held together cherished
Hope, broke up into knots apart.

Into the dear groups that had made each one home,
And clasping stood, praying their last prayers
In tears together, while the sickening foam
Came flaking down the cabin stairs.

Three hundred souls went out in the "Evening Star,"
And a small ship's boat held all that came back;
A strange vessel landed them, on a strange shore,
For the "Evening Star" was a wreck.

And the warm sun broke, innocently raying,
Next morning, when the storm had sunken down,
Making all rose the wavelets that were playing,
With their burden, scattered and strewn.

Rafters, and human bodies, dead, but still fair
In death, and passive while the water dips,
And tosses into feathery spray their hair,
And rises bappling to their lips.

But the sporting wavelets they heeded no more,
Thou hadst hushed their crying, oh sea, oh sea!
So didst lay them down on thy sandy floor
At the bottom, and let them be!

ANOTHER.

THERE is a grief that like a venomèd dart,
 Pricking head upwards through a pile of conquered
 arms,

Conquered with pain amid the din of life's alarms,
 Still as we tread thrusts deep its rankling smart,
 More hopeless, helpless, than aught other—
 Grief for another !

Our wounded feet grow hard towards the end
 Of an all-rugged road, even the tortured frown,
 May turn to smiles beneath the long-worn thorny crown ;
 But on the brow of a belovèd friend,
 Far sharper to behold it there than feel
 The pang we cannot heal !

What is there left us but to weep ? At best
 To try and trust the chastening stroke be sent to teach
 Some truth that else his groping clasp had failed to
 reach ;
 And then to pray our loved one may have rest,
 And peace among the blessed, though knowing we
 Shall not be there to see.

But what, when touched by sickness of the soul
We see one, sweetly rev'renced in an earlier day,
Slackening from some high point, along the down-
ward way,

Weak towards help, strong only 'gainst control;
Showing that all our tears and prayers are vain,
Our efforts useless pain!

What peace for us to know that every care,
That every weary struggle of a vexèd life
May leave us ever nobler conquerors in the strife;
The victory greatest through the worst despair!
The crown we could not, and we would not win,
If through another's sin!

Be still, oh voices, urging to the ascent;
The crags are sharp, and sharper as we miss the way,
The crags are sharp, and oft, too oft, we miss the way,
And every time our bleeding hands are rent,
Because our eyes, tear-blinded as we go,
Are turned on one below.

Did we believe in mediatorial charm,
Or hold that pain of ours could be another's hope,
Our willing knees would smoothe for him the painful
slope,

And seem no harm what shielded him from harm—
In vain, when each incarnate soul we know
Must reap what he doth sow!

Oh! there are times, when we could gladly think
Our part no greater in the river gliding by—
The immortal river, flowing to the unknown sea,
Than the green rushes on a streamlet's brink—
And human chance than breezes playing there,
Among their reedy hair.

Times when we think it would be sweet to lie
In the brown earth, and let our quiet fingers grow
Into the long grass waving o'er our heads—and know
That was the end—to rest eternally—
Content to yield the heirship we might keep
To buy another sleep.

Pardon us, Great One—Thou who lov'st so well,
That Thy love's shadow, wanting its wisdom, branded
In our souls, o'erlaps itself, and flows expanded
In channels leading where we cannot tell.
Thou wouldst not let us miss Thy love for ever,
While we love another!

THE ALDER TREE.

A PALE moon-streak on the wall,
A moonshine lake on the grass,
Two little twin-leaves that fall
Where a shadow used to pass.

Thou art pallid, O moonlight,
Thou'rt ghostly, thou ancient tree,
If of all the nights to-night,
That shadow comes not for me.

There ! Is it a swaying bough,
Uprising and bending down ?
A shadow ! two shadows now,
That mingle and melt in one !

Oh ! heart, why camest thou back again,
Across the wild, wide sea,
To break before those shadows twain,
Beneath the alder-tree ?

DEAD LOVE.

I HAD loved her better than he !
The fuchsia is dangling its red, red drops,
Over the mignonette,
And the autumn banks, that were purple then,
Are orange and purple yet.
What is autumn to me ?

The glow of a radiant face
That is burning, burning into my brain,
While my heart is as cold
As the winter grave of a buried love,
Where the sun athwart the mould
Is its one saddest grace.

There's a year-old grave that I know ;
The briar-rose flung it a spray from the hedge,
But when leaves fall apace
In the cold grey light, comes the level snow
And buries the burying place.
Oh, the pitiful snow !

COMPUNCTIONS.

FAIR Alice sits by her casement low,
 Leaning into the night;
The moon shines full on her throat of snow,
 And sideways, down with a glancing light,
To a jewelled arm below.

The fir-tops are silent underneath,
 And the tall elms are still;
Asleep in the summer night's low breath,
 That faints to her aching brow with a chill,
Bound in its jasmine wreath.

Are they two diamonds, or tears that fall,
 With a flash in and out?
Alice, were you not queen of the ball?
 Alice, what are you thinking about?
Or, are you thinking at all?

Not of him you gave the fuchsia to,
 With haughty nonchalance,
For picking up your fan for you,
 Dropped by your partner in the dance,
Unwilling he should sue.

Not of him who hid the rag of lace
 That a nail tore away
From the white hem of your trailing dress,
 Though he'll treasure it many a day
For the sake of your face.

Nor of him who turned from hot to cold
 As your eyes met and you smiled;
Him you can loose at your will or hold,
 With a glance set his heart beating wild,
Fix him, craven or bold.

Do you think the moon hath a cold kiss;
 And that beauty like hers,
Rare and chill on a human cheek, may miss
 In the end, perhaps, more than it cares?
Or, are you thinking this?—

Were I less cold than I seem to be,
And my lovers truer,
Room were still for us both to go free ;
What fools men make of themselves for sure !
And what a fool of me !

A rose-blush cheek and a sparkling eye,
Set round by a snowy scarf
Can gain a heart, or win you a lie
Any day ; what can you do but laugh,
And be mad bye and bye ?

If I knew one who was worth them all,
And he should care for me,
A brave true heart, should I love him well
Or hate his superiority ?
That I can hardly tell.

If one were only a butterfly,
To shine a summer day,
Or a green, green leaf, to toss on high
On a branch's top, and drift away,
Under a windy sky,

One would hardly have time to be sad!

Go, go, you flowery crown;

A crown of flowers for a heart that's glad,

And mine is vexed; so I cast you down,

With such old hopes as I had.

Old hopes, are you best laid in your tomb,

With a flower dropt by moonlight?

And what to fill up the empty room:

Thoughts that sit light, changing fancies bright,

And gone like the hawthorn bloom?

Pooh! weeping makes the eyes red, if you

Weep long; and secret sorrow

Turns peach bloom cheeks to a pallid hue—

I wear my blue moirè to-morrow,

White cheeks don't go with blue!

IN MY GARDEN.

In the cool grey light of evening,
When the flowers are nodding with sleep,
I walk in my quiet garden,
And watch the pale moon creep

Through the eastern sky full slowly,
Leading upwards the coming night;
While the passing day descending,
Leaves behind a solemn light.

Two ridges of gold cloud-mountain,
Serene and high in the west,
Stand like the golden portals
Of the mansions of the blest.

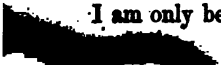
And a pause comes in the hurry
Of life that is pushing me on,
Between the past and its failures,
And the shapeless things to be done.

Between the ranks, for a moment,
I can see a vision clear,
That stills my heart's hot beating,
And lightens it of its fear.

A moment, and it is vanished,
And the way is no longer plain;
But I know, in a brighter garden,
I shall see that vision again.

THE BROOKLET.

I HAVE come a dusty way
To where the brooklet gushes,
To hear it say its say
To the tall reeds and rushes.
Oh brooklet, what do you mean?
"Under and over, under and over:"
I am neither under nor over;
I am only between.



Up from the deep of the earth,
Down from the clouds above,
Tell me some secret of worth,
Whisper a message of love.
Here I keep sitting, and still
You prattle along at your will,
And you say, or I fancy you say,
“He must come for many a day,
And learn to be patient, and wait
From early morning till late,
Who would get my secret from me.”
That will I, brooklet, readily.
Listen and learn from day to day,
Till I am no more seen.
I am thy patient lover,
“Under and over, under and over.”
Would that I were under and over,
Only not between !

THE SECRET.

I TOLD it to the south wind,
I gave it to the west;
Bade them bear it far away,
That my heart might have rest.

They blew it north and eastward,
Ever so far away;
But I looked into my heart,
And found it there to-day !

A CONFIDENCE.

TO-DAY my lip was trembling with a word,
Had blessed the friendly ear that should have heard
My friend frowned, angry at the word's delay;
It slipped back to my heart, and died away !

TIME AND THE MAN.

THE man stood and said,
" I shall soon be dead ;
Time is flowing swiftly by ;
Yet it doth not bring
Me any good thing,
Though I've waited patiently."
Time !—" Lo, fold by fold,
Here my garment old,
He lets go by with a stare ;
Though I stand and ask,
He doth bring no task ;
So I pass and leave him there."

UPON MILLAIS' PICTURE OF THE
CARPENTER'S SHOP.

MARVELLOUS story, that through eighteen hundred
years
Has come, warm with God's love, and wet with
sinners' tears,

'To us ; what wonder if the glory of the past
Have set it in a halo all too bright
To gild the page turned to our mortal sight.
Thanks to the hand which in these latter days has cast
That sacred scene in such familiar mould.
Whose sweet unconsciousness does yet unfold
Its deep significance, while we behold.
Oh ! hearts bowed in the dust beneath life's iron
wheel,
Come from the haunts of unblessed toil, and glowing
feel
How close He is ! Oh, eyes to want and sin grown
dry,
Gaze till the tears run down in softening stream,
Owning the creed, no preacher's mocking dream,
Which saith : " Unto the lowly He is ever nigh."
There sits the white-winged dove, and broodeth o'er
The loving group upon that humble floor ;
And see, ah, Christ, Thy waiting sheep are pushing
at the door !

DEATH.

Oh tiresome Death, that com'st between me still
And the warm sun ! Upon a July day,
When shadows love to lie on seeding grass,
Under the spreading branches—when the sky
Hangs over all things bluely infinite;
Why must thy shade set deep within my soul
Uprise between the brightness and mine eye?
The little brown bird swinging on the twig
Bemoans not leafless days, and bare cold boughs;
Nor hangs the rose its head, counting the leaves
To drop off, one by one, before the sun
Shall kindle blushes of another day.
But only I, turning my upward gaze
Through gladness unto glory, catch the flap
Of thy unwholesome wings between the light;
I only cannot look into high heaven
Without thy speck to mar its clear expanse,
And warn my soaring soul back to the earth
And mortal memories. Oh, tiresome Death!

SONNETS.

SOLITUDE.

Oh foolish soul, that dread'st to stand alone !
In the glad world, with lovers by our side,
Along life's stream with friends to watch and guide,
One scarcely stays to think, " I am but one !"
How will it be when there shall come a day
When we *must* stand alone? Think we to say,
" 'Twas such a one who bade me ;" or, " I saw
" Him do so, and thought I might do the same ?"
Ill for us if we have no better claim
For pardon, by the judgment of the law !
'Twere wise and not unloving to withdraw
Our life from other lives from time to time,
And, praying God would make it somewhat plain,
Alone with Him unfold the tangled skein.

I THINK we are too prone, in this smooth day,
To shut the fumes of evil lives without
Death's door, that not an odour find its way
Back here; and, like a foul ghost, creep about
The scene of finished wrong. What, if a man,
Choking the soul within him, give the rein
To fleshly lusts, through his allotted span;
Or bit, mayhap, by the desire for gain,
Pick, pilfer, cheat, till death do catch his hand,
And shake the winnings from his stiffening clutch;
Is he the better dead—that we grow kind
At once, and drop our tones to say of such—
“ Well, well, poor fellow, let him rest—he's gone ?”
Wrong, better hated, were less often done !

FOR, if we thought, is it not often true
That our own coward hearts, not charity,
Deny the dead, the righteous scorn their due,
Self-conscious, deprecating memory?
Did we but know that our own deeds would live

Unsoftened by the halo death doth cast,
Making all gentle an unlovely past,
For earthly fame even might we higher strive.
Alas ! that men believe strange power should hide
In that same death, dark river, to whose side
They press with stained and greedy hands, and think
To dip, to rise, pure, as by some process
Electro-whitened, from the other brink,
Regenerate for that side and for this.

JEALOUSY.

BLIND-HEARTED birth, self-worship grown to pain !
One hath not loved who hath not felt with shame
The scanty worth, the smallness of the claim
Which, giving all, yet asks not all again.
Poor is thy love who wincest at the smart
Thou know'st to wring from out dear looks and words
Given to another, making them sharp swords
Wherewith to prick and goad thy hungry heart.
Oh ! though thou hast built up the faith of years,
And garnished it with growth of tenderest fruits,

They are not proofs of love, those bitter tears
But spots of mildew eating out its roots;
So, if thy love find place for angry wound,
Lay thou thy finger there, and say, "Unsound!"

For if thy friend love other more than thee,
Thou canst not clip his love to fit thy need;
Thou hast no hope, unless thy love indeed
Can lift thee up to where his love may be.
Perchance, unwitting, he hath dropped a seed
Into thy heart; it is for thee to mind
And tend the growth after such gracious kind
That it may bear a flower and not a weed.
Then, nourished with patience and with pain,
If he still pass its fragrance coldly by,
From plucking up thy love do thou refrain,
But wrap it round with sorrow lest it die:
'Tis but love's husk, and when thy sorrow's dead,
Thy love shall grow in strength above the loved one's
head.

Oh, so far off, and yet so near ! Who see'st
The valley-lily underneath the leaf,
Into whose ear she shakes her fragrant peal
Sweet chime, inaudible to grosser sense ;
We cannot hear thee, and we cannot see ;
But we do know thine ear doth also hear
The lowest beating of our laden hearts.
Thine eye can pierce beneath the outward sheath
Of seeming, and if aught of lily-pure
There is that blossoms in our hidden life,
Oh ! thou wilt see it, and we need not fear
Lest thou shouldst pass it over for the flowers,
More rich and striped with bloom thou dost transplant,
To fill the borders of thy paradise !



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